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American Indians, Past and Present

A slightly abridged version of the higher-priced edition

INDIANS

OF THE AMERICAS

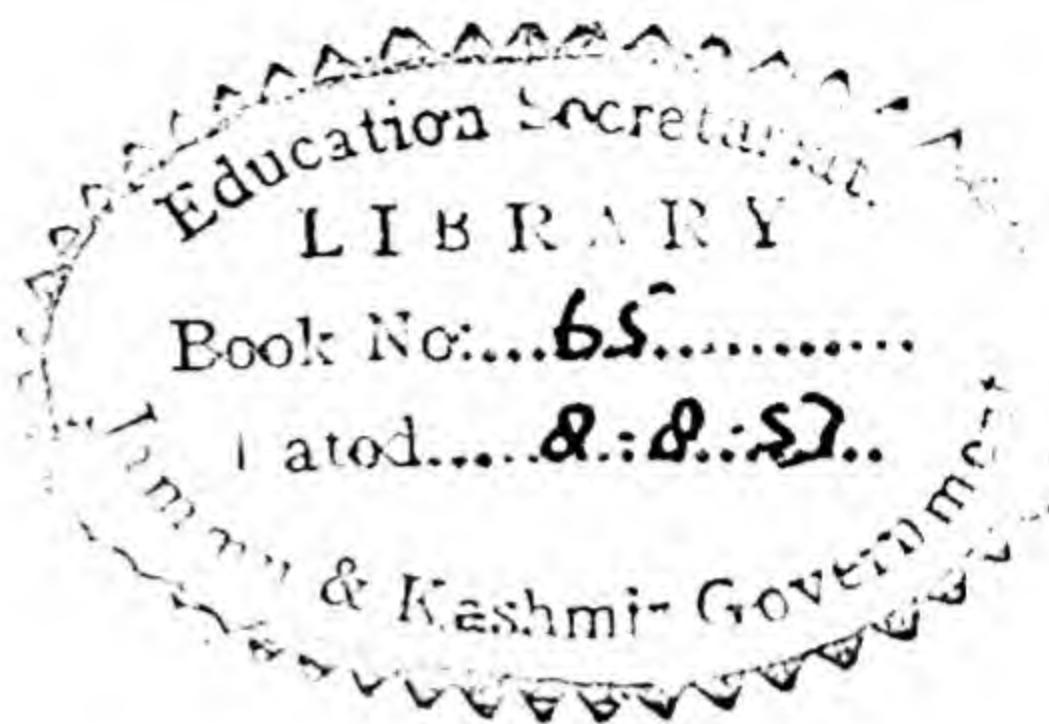


JOHN COLLIER

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as Las Casas had foretold. What all of the documents dwell on is the winging, blossoming joyousness of the life of these communes, and their many-sided, abundant economic productiveness within an abbreviated work-week borne upon music and ceremony. The Crown received its full tribute, and was content. The communes were virile enough; they manufactured their muskets, cannon and gunpowder; and their militia beat Portugal back from the utopian boundaries for a hundred years.

The historians account for the downfall of the Jesuit utopia, commencing in 1768, through external events exclusively. European political conflicts caused the Jesuits to be expelled from Spain and from all Spanish-America; leaderless, the communes were over-borne by Portugal, and the Indians dispersed to the wilderness. The city-states went back to the earth; the golden age was done. The historians are accurate; but they miss a point, and that point is at the center.

Las Casas, and those who followed in his path, perceived profoundly *the individual*. His depth and burningness of perception of the individual, like that of Saint Augustine, his theological master, were such as to make the perceptions of Rousseau, Thomas Jefferson, John Stuart Mill and Emerson appear thin by comparison. Whence the impelling power of Las Casas' doctrine of liberty. Those who worked in Las Casas' tradition perceived as he perceived. They perceived the individual Indian—potent, sweet, practicable, resourceful, co-operative and often splendid. But *they did not perceive the societies which had formed this Indian personality*. They could not know what none in their age guessed. How could they, when even in our time, after centuries, those of us who have been educators or administrators—in our own American Indian country, in Africa, in Oceania, in Asia—apprehend but timidly and, in the main, negatively, *the ineluctable potency of the native society*.

The role of leadership in the native societies; the ways that leaders are chosen and trained for the two-way flow between leaders and people; the educative processes of native societies, often unformalized, sometimes even secret, which are so infallible; the ways through which innovation is embraced by the societies—these are profound mysteries still.

But Las Casas' followers substituted *fiat* leadership for native leadership, *fiat* forms for native forms, *fiat* motivation for native motivation—they substituted, in fact, a *fiat* society for a native society. What they substituted did take into account,

and build on, the native propensities, temperaments and socially inherited genius; but the transposition was comparable to the substitution of a hothouse, with ecologically untrained gardeners for the age-formed complexities of a forest. That which they achieved, within these conditions, could endure only if they, the Las Casas disciples, endured. It is precisely the almost unapproached greatness of their achievement—the loveliness joined with virile power within freedom—which makes intense, solemn and immortal their lesson to the world.

Colonizer, missionary, moralist, idealist, crusader for causes, it is to the hurt of all that you love, to the defeat of your own purpose and the ruin of men, if you, plunging toward your aim in terms of individuals, aggregations of individuals, or external material results, ignorantly or impatiently by-pass the society.

CHAPTER 7

The Continuing Spanish Record

THE SPANISH record with the Indians is not concluded yet. Queen Isabella believed that she loved and cherished her Indians. Her last will and testament very movingly voices this sentiment. Thus do the schoolbooks speak; and in his *Life of Las Casas* Sir Arthur Helps, speaking of Isabella, exclaims: "Could the poor Indians but have known what a friend to them was dying, one continuous wail would have gone up from Española to all the Western Hemisphere."

It was, however, Isabella who confirmed the vicious system of *repartimiento*—the *encomienda* with its accompanying forced labor—which Columbus set up in the West Indies.

Ferdinand, after Isabella's death, wrote in 1511, "Our Lord is well served in the bringing of the Indians from the outlying islands to where gold is." Because of the scarcity of Indians due to the exterminations in Española, Ferdinand spurred on the slave-taking raids in the Bahamas and in regions farther west by suspending "for the present" the payment to the Crown of tribute for each Indian seized. But he entered the note that he had learned that the slave-taking expeditions were not being efficiently conducted; transportation and starvation were killing

so many Indians before their delivery to the Española mines that "it is somewhat burdensome to the conscience and not very profitable to the business."

Business considerations and conscience united in discrediting Indian chattel slavery. Indians who were not branded as chattel slaves paid yearly tribute to the Crown; chattel slaves did not. Other forced-labor arrangements proved more efficient and somewhat less homicidal. The Dominican order threw its weight against chattel slavery. In the year 1542, when the number of chattel slaves still ran into the hundreds of thousands, Las Casas wrote the articles (numbers 26 and 27) for the New Laws of the Indies, abolishing chattel slavery.

From the conquistadores came wails of woe. They pointed out that they held their slaves from the Crown. Indeed, they had bought their slaves from the Crown. Bernal Diaz, the chronicler of Cortés, at that time very favorably fixed in Guatemala, was sent to Spain to lobby against the iniquitous enactments of 1542—iniquitous to the conquistadores.

But the Crown, under advisement, stood firm and went even further. "No person, in war or in peace, may take, apprehend, use, sell or exchange as a slave, any Indian." This dated from 1548 and the prohibition was all-embracing.

As we have seen, other methods of forced labor were replacing chattel slavery. In the whole of Spain's New World, except as a military or punitive measure, chattel slavery had practically ceased to exist. It did not pay. What has since become known as peonage—comparable to serfdom in the old world sense but generally without the ameliorations of true serfdom—took its place. I have used before the terms *encomienda* and *repartimiento*. Let me define them again here—and along with them certain other terms, because they strike at the roots of the Spanish-American system.

An *encomienda* was a grant to a Spaniard, as a trustee of the Crown, of a body of land, with the Indians attached to the grant as serfs.

A *repartimiento* was a grant of Indian forced labor, whether to a land user, a mine, a factory, a monastery or for public works. In Peru, the Quechuan term *mita* was used in place of *repartimiento*; in the Spanish domain north of the Rio Grande, the word used was *la semana*.

An *encomendero* was not the owner, but the trustee of the land granted him. After one, two or three generations, the *encomienda* would be escheated to the Crown. The Crown then

administered it directly through *corregidores*; and *repartimientos* of Indian labor were assigned to the Crown's land.

The chattel slave paid no tribute; he was simply a tool, used for life by his owner. The Indian forced laborer, on the other hand, in *repartimiento* or *mita*, paid tribute both to the Crown and to the Church. The fundamental quantum was Indian tribute. Tribute maintained the caste and status of the Europeans to whom *encomiendas* had been awarded. From this tribute, all public works, religious instruction, monastic foundations, institutions of learning, hospitals and civil salaries came. To the individual Indian, the payment of tribute came to be the core of his economic life. It was death and taxes and nothing else.

Charles V was a strong prince, stubborn and obstinate, with a dominant sense of what to him seemed right and wrong. But the record is filled with his vacillations. He believed that the *encomienda* and the *repartimiento*, though wrong in principle, could be controlled and changed into institutions which would not be harmful to his Indian subjects. And, at the least, their souls had been saved.

Gold was a matter of necessity to him, as he viewed his empire—a continual flow of it. His ambitions demanded it. Even apart from his economic and strategic conceptions, gold had a fetish value in his mind. To him, I think, the question was whether the *encomienda* and *repartimiento* brought home the best results in terms of gold and labor convertible into gold. The priests were there to take care of souls. And a Las Casas, after all, even if things were not quite as they should be, should mind his own (and very important) business.

Arguing in general along these lines, Charles entered into partnership with the conquistadores (which is to say the many little emperors of the New World), became himself, indeed, the chief conquistador. He made the *encomienda* and *repartimiento* into his own instruments.

Meanwhile the stream of ordinances for the protection of his Indians poured forth—as they were to continue to pour forth for three centuries. These ordinances were not merely statutes. They were also arguments, expostulations, pleadings; they recited the conditions that made them necessary; they begged patience.

The Crown received one-fifth of the gold and silver seized from the Incas and Aztecs and later produced from the mines. This royal fifth, according to the estimates of Humboldt, totaled one billion pesos, or about two billion dollars, between 1493

and 1803. The record of Indian forced labor in quicksilver mining is as revealing as any, and suggests why the Crown's benignant intentions failed. Mercury was important in silver mining. In 1601, Philip III directed that Indians be congregated at the quicksilver mines. In 1616-19, Juan de Solorzano, in his capacity of *visitador* and governor, examined into the effects of mercury mining. He found that the life expectancy of the Indians was four years. "The poison penetrated to the very marrow, debilitating all the members and causing a constant shaking, and the workers usually died within four years." Solorzano reported fully to the Council of the Indies and to the King; but in 1631, Philip IV decreed that the *repartimientos* at the quicksilver mines be continued; and his successor after 1665, Charles II, renewed the decree.

From Charles V to the Viceroy Mendoza in Mexico, while the New Laws of 1542 were being formulated, went an instruction: That he should forbid the Indians to pay tribute in kind; he should accept tribute only in cash; and since the Indians possessed no cash, they would have to work out the tribute in the mines.

In 1574-75, the Viceroy and the Audencia (the court of administration and of judgment in Mexico) found themselves meditating. The "natural viciousness" of the Indians troubled them deeply. Work was the cure for the Indians' wickedness; and work in the mines was the best cure. This meditation, in the form of a lengthy report, went to the Crown. It was supererogatory since the Indians already were in the mines and would stay there. But in 1609 the Crown received a full report on the moral gains of the Indians through the mining *mitas*. It was reported by Messia that Indians, sent in *mitas* to the mines of Potosi, in Peru, frequently had to travel a hundred and fifty leagues each way. Twice he had watched them start from the province of Chutquito. Seven thousand departed; about two thousand returned. Five thousand died or were unable to make the return journey. Each worker took his family with him, and eight or ten llamas, and some alpacas for food. They took mats, for they slept on the ground and it was very cold. The journey each way required two months, for the animals were slow and the little children had to walk. When the *mita* ended (the forced-labor assignment lasted six months) often the Indians had no pack animals or food for the homeward journey; also, they knew that when they reached home they would be seized for other forced labor. Sometimes they would be re-impressed

at once and sent back to the Potosi mines. Some provinces had become so depopulated that they did not have enough Indians to meet the quota. In such cases the *justicias* (procurers of the *mitas*) and the mine owners forced the Indian caciques to hire the Indians from other districts at the expense of the caciques.

The Indians in *mita* worked twelve hours a day, going down as much as six hundred feet, working by candle light in stifling air. Ascending, they had to carry the metal on their backs; the trip out took five hours, and a false step might mean death. Reaching the surface, often they would be denounced by the overseer for idling, or for bringing up so light a load, and would be sent back into the mine. Their wage was so low that it failed even to supply the bare necessities of life.

Surely, the reader will be moved to exclaim, these conditions could not have been representative. The Indians would have been annihilated utterly.

They *were* annihilated. In the Audencias of Lima and Charcas, for example, the Indians declined from 1,490,000 in 1561 to 612,000 in 1754. And prior to 1561, the depopulation had been enormous. In 1553, Francisco de Victoria, of the Council of the Indies, had reported that "the abominations cried to heaven." Men and women, young and old, he reported, were being forced to work in the mines without rest; and for food they were allowed one pint of maize a day. As the Indian manpower died off, the Indian women were put into the mines more ruthlessly, working in knee-deep water through the coldest season of the year.

Finally the Crown itself showed distress. In 1581 Philip II addressed the Audencia of Guadalajara. One-third of the Indians had been destroyed already, the Crown stated. Those yet living were being forced to pay the tributes for the dead. They were being bought and sold. They slept in the fields. Mothers killed their children rather than let them be taken to the mines. Thus wrote the Monarch himself to his subordinates.

The problem beckons us out from the New World, and back to Spain and Europe. Charles V had resisted the *encomienda*; the *repartimiento*, the *mita*; then had yielded to them; then had made them his own instruments for tribute. He believed that he could curb their ferocities through regulation. But he and his successors failed to curb themselves.

Philip II had warred with the Netherlands. The Moors had revolted and the ensuing Civil War in Spain had desolated Granada. The Barbary pirates were scourging the coasts. The Crown's treasury, practically non-existent, had been inadequate

for the building and maintaining of naval forces sufficient to suppress the pirates. The years around 1581 when Philip addressed the Audencia of Guadalajara were crucial. That year he annexed Portugal, placating the rival claimant with an immense grant of land. Then he proceeded to build the Armada. The Barbary pirates could not be crushed; but England, the heretic, must be crushed.

Whence was the revenue to come? In the quest for it, extreme totalitarian regulation had been imposed on all industry within Spain. By the end of the century, the country had been reduced to a state of Byzantine regulation in which everything had to be done under the eye and subject to the interference of a vast horde of government officials, all ill-paid, often not paid at all—all, therefore, necessitous and corrupt.

Such was the condition within Spain. In the New World, whose effectual existence in the Crown's mind was that of a feeder of the bankrupt treasury, "Byzantine regulation," remotely controlled, was also the method of governance. With deliberation the Crown had shunted into the New World the criminal elements of Spain. A death sentence could be commuted to a two-year indenture to the Caribbean islands. The dissolute and neurotic among the clergy were got rid of by assignment to Peru or Mexico.

Like the Crown, the Church had united itself with the *encomienda* and *repartimiento*; and its demands on Indian labor put all moderation aside. As Indian depopulation intensified, the secular and ecclesiastical pressures on the residual labor supply intensified correspondingly; and always the overriding demand for tribute drove the local exploiters on and on.

These factors and conditions aggregated to a fatality. And what seems noteworthy is not that the Crown's regulative efforts in the New World failed, in the main, but that they were persisted in at all. Rather frequently, historians seek consolation in the thought that after all, the *mita* in Peru and the *encomienda* in New Spain did but continue the pre-Conquest oppressions. The consolation is wholly fictitious with respect to Peru. In the case of Mexico, the late years of Aztec rule did tend that way. A landowning class took its rise, many Indians became share croppers, and the Aztec overlords exacted tribute without returning equivalent service to the peoples. But light burdens, borne by the individual as a member of a co-operative and largely autonomous community (the pre-Conquest fact) became, under Spain, burdens which crushed to death, borne by staggering individual Indians whose communities had

been tossed into fragments and whom alien masters drove with the lash and held in chains.

We have defined the word *repartimiento*. In the institution's evolution, the word took on an additional meaning; it was used to denote the process whereby debt-slavery was substituted, gradually, for the earlier methods of labor-forcing. A market was needed for all sorts of manufactured goods, produced in the New World and also exported by Spain. These, the Indians were forced to buy; and often having no use for the goods, and always having no cash to pay, the Indians became debtors. The operation was a continuous one across the generations. The debts being everlasting, the Indians found themselves enmeshed in a wage-slavery which held no hope at all. And such was the situation when independence came—but for the Indians no independence, since debt peonage moved on, into and across the nineteenth century.

As debt-slavery became gradually all-embracing, the Crown limited the scope of the *repartimiento*—the labor-draft. For example, the legal grant of *repartimientos* was denied to the *obrajes*, or factories; in its place, debt-slavery chained the Indians to the factories; but in addition, the factories kidnapped the Indians outright and imprisoned them. Friederich A. A. von Humboldt, who visited these workshops near the end of the time of Spanish rule, observed not only a great imperfection of technical process, but also the unhealthiness of the situation, and the bad treatment to which the workmen were exposed.

One tries to find something to mitigate this dreadful record—the record which stamped its melancholy on nine-tenths of all the Indians of the hemisphere. Mitigation—a very, very little mitigation—is found in the working of three factors.

One factor was the increasing labor scarcity, due to Indian depopulation. This brought competition for Indian labor, and within the seventeenth century it put the mining *repartimiento*, in Mexico at least, practically to an end. Wages in the mines crept up; and as the labor was skilled, or semi-skilled, some faint tendency to conserve its supply began to operate. Similarly, on many an *encomienda*, where the labor was attached as serfs, it became expedient not to drive the Indians to extinction.

The second factor was the inner resourcefulness of the Indians. Through some miracle of self-adjustment, they were able to keep their sweetness of spirit. The bleakness externally viewed, the bleakness in all except spiritual fact, was not quite matched by bleakness within the soul. Here, religion was a saving force; the Indian built himself a new religion, genuinely

synthesizing pre-Conquest components with Roman Catholic components. The Indian did this, not the Church; it was the Indian's own creative accomplishment; yet the Church did allow it; and in the Church, even though he knew from heavy and mounting experience that the Church was one of his most avid exploiters, the Indian rested his hope and found his home. And the great myth of the soul, the eternal dream which has its truth mightier than fact, did hold many, many of the Churchmen in its embrace, along with the Indians.

The third factor was the continuing effort by the Crown to make effective the spirit of the Laws of the Indies. Though bankruptcy mounted and mounted in imperial Spain—bankruptcy financial, moral, intellectual and political—still that other part of the Spanish mind, whose representative voice for all time was Las Casas, strove on. The effort had its greatest intensity and duration in Mexico; and one of the reasons for this is to be sought in the creation, probably by the Viceroy Don Martic Enríques, about 1573, of a special Court of Appeals called the *Juzgado General de Indios* for all cases involving Indians. Apparently no such institution existed in the other parts of the Spanish dominion, yet if the *Juzgado* had been established earlier and made universal and consistent throughout Spain's New World, the situation might have been quite different.

This is how the *Juzgado* operated: The Indians of three Pueblos, who had been required to furnish a *repartimiento* to the mines at Zacualpan, complained. They said they were paid only one *real* a day instead of the legal one and a half; that they were forcibly detained at the mine for two weeks; that the *Alguacil* had sold Indians to an *hacendado* on their way to the mines.

In the trial the charges of the Indians were shown to be substantially correct. It was learned that the Indians were sometimes forced to work naked in water; that they were brought to the mines tied together by the neck; that they were sometimes beaten; that the *Juez Repartidor* had been guilty of selling them for two and one-half pesos apiece to the Jesuits for work in the sugar mills; and so on.

The *Fiscal*, reviewing the case for the *Juzgado General*, recommended the suspension of the *repartimiento* for two years, the punishment of the *Alguacil* with one hundred lashes, and the restitution of the money he had extorted from the Indians. No punishment for the Jesuits was recommended.

The *Juzgado* thereupon ordered the *Alcalde* (mayor) of Malinalco (one of the Pueblos) to proceed against the operators

of the mines. The *Alguacil* was sentenced to pay a fine of two hundred pesos, was exiled from the province and prohibited from ever holding any public office.

Now to follow the case through: Three years later the operators of these mines at Zacualpan petitioned for a restoration of their *repartimientos*. They pleaded that the denial of them was as much a penalty for the royal treasury as for the operators.

Two years passed and the operators renewed their petition. It now came out that, except for the removal of their *repartimientos*, none of the penalties imposed upon the operators had been executed. The *Fiscal* now recommended that the petition of the operators be granted, while the Indians of Malinalco still opposed the restoration of the *repartimientos*.

Two more years passed. The case was again argued before the *Juzgado General*, which at long last decided to renew the *repartimientos* to Zacualpan. But now it ordered that the *repartimientos* must be changed every fortnight; all Indians must be personally accounted for upon the return of the quota; the men must be paid in silver, not in goods; the *repartimientos* must be escorted by Indian *alcaldes*. *Justicias* failing to enforce these provisions were to be deprived of office and fined two hundred pesos; and the operators were warned not to abuse this concession, for at their next offense they would not only lose their *repartimientos* but would be exiled to the Philippines.

We do not know whether the *coverage* of the *Juzgado General de Indios* was adequate. But the integrity and persistence of the Court's activity are beyond doubt; and, in comparison with their lot in Peru, the Indians' lot in Mexico was eased.

Another institution introduced by the Spanish—that of the *reducciones* and *congregaciones*—was variously carried through in nearly all parts of the Spanish New World. The idea itself dated back to the Spanish Laws of Burgos of 1512–13. For purposes various and sometimes contradictory, the Indians were to be assembled into permanent reductions or congregations. The purposes were evangelization, accessibility of Indian forced-labor supply, protection from white slave-raiders and marauders, ease of administration, removal of Indians from land which the whites wanted for some other use. Sometimes the process of *congregación* was handled by the civil, sometimes by the religious arm. Generalization concerning the results is hardly possible at all. Little utopias were created and nurtured in the State of Michoacan, starting within a few years of the Conquest, by Bishop Don Vasco de Quiroga. These *hospitales* scarcely outlasted the great Bishop's lifetime. In Mexico the massive estab-

lishment of *congregaciones* was undertaken as a Crown policy by the civil arm. After abortive efforts commencing in 1590, whose effects on the Indians were disastrous, the Count of Monterey sent out a hundred expeditions to determine what places to use for *congregaciones* and what Indians to concentrate in them. The Friar Juan de Torquemada reported that, though the intention was to congregate Indians who were scattered in many places without order or government, the policy was so interpreted that even well-organized villages were seized as well, their houses burned and the people themselves driven to a new place.

Modern historians believe the Friar Torquemada's indictment to have been over-severe. Leslie Byrd Simpson quotes from various reports which tell of the establishment of these *congregaciones*; they have the ring of truthfulness, and they indicate a conscientious effort to do the thing required with as little hurt to the Indians as possible.

In brief, sometimes the *congregaciones* merely added other Indian groups to a large group in an existing village where excess land was judged to exist; and sometimes they forcibly amalgamated numbers of existing villages into one large new one, and burned the old villages; while sometimes they aggregated into one place Indians who had been living widely separated in the mountain country. The detailed results of *congregación* therefore were not uniform. The general and unintended effect, however, was clear to contemporaries. Epidemics were intensified through crowding the Indians together; social dislocation, already driven profoundly into Indian life in the eighty years since the Conquest, was further extended; and the dwindling Indians were fed more easily into the systems of forced labor.

In Peru, the establishment of *reducciones* was a task of the civil arm. It was carried out more massively than in Mexico, and was one of the main drives of government during the viceroyalty of Don Francisco de Toledo, 1569-81. Multitudes of Indians had fled the ferocities of the earlier colonial years into jungle and mountain fastnesses. The mines were devouring Indian life swiftly, and new concentrations of Indians from regions far from the mines were constantly required. Toledo built the new *comunidades* upon the structure of the *ayllu*, the Inca social unit. In general, the *comunidades* were placed upon, or through migration placed themselves upon, the poorer, higher, more barren lands. When they were located, or found already existing, in the richer valleys, they were placed in *encomienda*.

The Crown granted lands to the Indian communities of various kinds, its rule being to grant that amount of land which the given community already was using, or an amount deemed enough for minimum needs. Often, a square league was granted. In New Mexico, the Pueblos received by grant all lands within one league of the plazas, to north, south, east, and west. The titles were in the communities, these communities being "of the nature of municipal corporations," as the Supreme Court of the United States has since described their status. These lands could be alienated only with the consent of the Crown. With a good deal of perseverance, the Crown protected these Indian communal holdings—with greater success in North than in South America. As generations passed, the numbers of Mestizos and Creoles increased enormously. These relatively landless multitudes pressed against the *encomiendas*, the Church and Crown lands and also against the Indian grants. Their land hunger was a major cause of the revolutions which brought independence.

The second flow of events was the hypertrophy of landholding by the Church. Through grants from the Crown, through bequest and mortgage, through purchases with vast sums derived from tithes, alms, etc., and through the confiscations by the Inquisition, the Church became the largest of all landholders, rural and urban.

The Church was economically privileged throughout the Colonial era. Its functionaries were not under the civil jurisdiction, and ecclesiastical capital was exempt from taxation in the early times and virtually exempt in the later. But the Church's economic dominance did not go unchallenged. The Crown and the higher Church authorities made periodic attempts to curb it. The Church nevertheless held to its earthly own and as a *landlord* fell away from its vision and its mission. Only at the margins of the Spanish New World did it remain faithful to the ideals of its great spiritual leaders and, I think I can say, to its trust.

CHAPTER 8

The Indians and the Republics

NAPOLEON invaded Spain in 1808. The Spanish King, Ferdinand VII, capitulated. The Spanish people resisted and, fighting on, proved to be the first great obstacle in the path of Napoleonic world conquest. But the wars for independence broke out in all of Spain's colonial America. These were civil wars as well as wars of independence. Independence finally came in 1826, but in the intervening years the Creoles and Mestizos had ruled on their own; and they were in the saddle for a century to come. The Indian, except as his blood was intermingled with the Mestizos, was still, for the most part, an unemancipated serf.

In Mexico, the struggle for independence began as a social revolution. It was led by two great Roman Catholic priests; and it was waged by the Indians. The first of these priests was Miguel Hidalgo, who was in his middle fifties when the struggle began. Hidalgo had worked in the spirit of Don Vasco de Quiroga, and by his methods, establishing among the Indians co-operative textile and pottery works, bee culture, silk culture and grape culture. The civil authorities tore up the Indians' grape orchards at Dolores, near Queretaro, where Hidalgo was stationed. Then, as the historian Zarate tells, the church bell at Dolores tolled, summoning the Indians, and "what had been quiet New Spain during three centuries rose in arms at the magic words, liberty and emancipation, and the shout of war resounded throughout the soil of Mexico from the vast deserts of the north to the shores of Ussmicinta."

As his standard, Hidalgo used the image of the Indian Virgin of Guadalupe. In six weeks he headed an army of 80,000, armed with machetes, pikes, slings, and bows and arrows. His army was met by well-armed soldiery, and by degrees was cut to pieces. Hidalgo rejected pardon, and ordered the emancipation of all bondslaves, the end of tribute and the restoration of land to the Indians of the Guadalajara district. He was killed by treachery, and another village priest took up the leadership.

But the Bourbons were back on the Spanish throne, and they poured reinforcements into Mexico.

The second priest was Father José Maria Morelos who, in the years between 1808 and 1813, was the leader of a goodly portion of Mexico. He summoned a national congress which formally declared independence. But with the return of the Bourbons he was overwhelmed. His people suffered horrors beyond description. He himself was captured in 1815, and, having been denounced by the Inquisition as "a heretic, pursuer and disturber of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, profaner of the holy sacraments, schismatic, lascivious, a hypocrite, enemy of Christianity, traitor to God, King and Pope," he was turned over to the secular arm and was killed.

To trace the evolution of the struggles for independence is beyond the province of this book. At the end of years of strife, ideals of political liberty had been written into the South American constitutions, particularly into those which the great Bolivar inspired.

In most of the remainder of Spanish colonial America, independence was from the start an affair of the native-born whites and some of the Mestizos, Cholos, Ladinos (mixed-bloods); the Indians fared as in Mexico.

Throughout, the Indians not merely "secured no benefits" but were pressed deeper down. The entail upon the Indians' community lands was lifted; the lands were individualized; individual faithless Indians were permitted to sell their own and their groups' lands; encroachment went unrebuked and uncurbed; in Peru, the *comunidades* were legally declared to be not persons or corporations, and thus were forbidden to defend themselves in the courts. Only here and there, brief intermissions of dispossession took place. In Bolivia such an intermission came in 1871. The Bolivian dictator Melgarejo had abolished the *comunidades* by decree, individualized their communal lands, and authorized their sale to whites. But in 1871 Melgarejo was overthrown. The new government annulled such sales, compensating the bona fide purchasers of Indian community lands. The *comunidades* as reservoirs of labor-supply had economic importance; this gradually won for them a minimum of tolerance and protection.

Such is the fact. Yet, there is an anomaly which must be reported. The Indian population curve, both in Mexico and Peru, started to rise. Neither past nor present statistics are exact; but between 1805 and 1910 (when the Revolution commenced

which was to ease their lot), Mexico's Indians increased from about 2,500,000 to about 6,000,000; between the same years, Mexico's Mestizos increased from some 2,000,000 to some 8,000,000. In the Andes, since independence was won, the Indians have doubled in numbers at the least. These increases cannot be accounted for through material factors alone, because the material factors remained almost constant. One cannot help but wonder whether the Indian soul, at its deep unconscious level, entered into hope through independence from Spain. Perhaps it knew, or hoped, that after one more century of anguish, the lifting of the Indian's doom actually would begin, so that the will to live, and not to die, became the Indian's will. Possibly the Spaniard, in the Indian mind, had become the symbol and announcement of death, and the Spaniard's overthrow broke the lethal power of the symbol and announcement. The population curve swung upward with independence from Spain—that is all we know.

Yet the Porfirio Diaz regime in Mexico built up those intensified, unbearable pressures on the Indian which insured that the next revolution would be a mass revolution and a social revolution. Expropriation of the Indian communities, under forms of law or no forms, was pressed throughout Mexico. The Yaquis were deported to Yucatan as slaves. On the more generous of the *haciendas* the Indian peons earned eight cents a day; they supported their families on that. But the miseries of the *haciendas* reached beyond their own peons to the whole of Mexico. They used no more than a small fraction of the arable land contained within them; their immense holdings were not for use but for monopoly of the Indian labor supply. Protected by high tariffs on grains, they hoarded their produce, speculating on the scarcity market. They resisted all improvement of agricultural method.

In addition, under Diaz, Mexico as a whole saw the passage of great areas of land to non-Mexican, absentee ownership; saw its mineral and oil wealth pass to foreign concessionaires; saw the looming of a new "Yankee" bondage to take the place of the bondage to Spain.

All of these factors, with many others, entered into the prolonged, tortuous revolution in Mexico which followed the overthrow of Diaz. The Indians' own pressures forced agrarian reform into the very center of the revolutionary program. By 1915, the legal basis for a redistribution of land had been laid; by 1917, the Constitution had sanctioned this redistribution.

Mexico was, and still is, overwhelmingly agricultural in its economy. The mass of the people depend on agriculture, the Indians almost entirely. The *comparative* facts as to crop production greatly emphasize the picture.

Of the area planted to 34 crops in 1930, 58 per cent was planted to corn. Of this total of corn acreage, two-thirds produced only 6 quintals or less per hectare, compared with 15.5 quintals in Spain in the same year; 14 in France; 22.7 in Canada; 20.9 in Austria. For wheat, occupying 9.4 per cent of the cropped land in Mexico, and planted on the irrigated land, the yield was 6 quintals per hectare as compared with 13 quintals in Italy, 9.7 in the United States and 11.5 in Canada. For frijoles, one of the staples of Indian diet, the average yield per hectare was running at *less than one-fifth of the average yield in Spain*.¹

Why these severe deficit figures? Counter-revolutionary spokesmen in Mexico and abroad have attributed them to the break-up of the great holdings and the re-vestment of the Indians with land. On the contrary, it is the *encomienda* and *hacienda* systems which built the cumulative deficits through hundreds of years. Exploitative and non-reciprocating toward the Indians, they were the same toward the land. They mined it, did not farm it. Through the century before 1910, the Indian communities, on landholdings constantly shrinking yet with rising populations, had no choice but to work their already marginal lands to death. The communities possessed no working capital and had no access to credit or to agricultural advice; the *hacendados* with very rare exceptions ignored agricultural science, content to let peon labor take the place of improved agricultural tools.

Not merely was the soil nurture mined out through one-crop, unfertilized use; it was washed out and blown out through water and wind erosion. What went forward, and what goes forward still, was and is a process of silent catastrophe which, unless it can be reversed, dooms most of the Mexican plateau to agricultural extermination within the century ahead. There remains Mexico's tropical belt; but the costs of development, and the uprootings of Mexican life, will be enormous, when or if the tropical belt becomes the only unexhausted agricultural area. It must be understood that Mexico is no case apart, and that analogous factors have brought, for example, hundreds of millions of acres in the United States into a state comparable to that of the Mexican plateau.

¹*The Ejido—Mexico's Way Out* by Eyler N. Simpson. 1937. University of North Carolina Press.

One other basic fact must be reiterated here. Rural Mexico — Indian rural Mexico—for unknown ages has had as its ultimate unit the local community. It has been a world of villages, of pueblos. Prior to the last Aztec years, the thousands of pueblos possessed each its own land. In the century before the Conquest, what may be called a tribute-title was bestowed on warriors and others who conspicuously served the State. When, under Spain, *encomienda* and *repartimiento* were imposed, still the pueblos remained as the basic Indian-life units. Spanish law and administration recognized and incorporated them, and tried to protect their landholdings. Independence variously took their landholdings away, and through the Diaz regime expropriation was pressed to virtual finality. *But the pueblos remained.* Very profound in the mass mind of Mexico was the concept of the Indian pueblo and its aspiration; and the pueblo stood as Mexico's everlasting fact.

In 1910, when the Revolution got under way, 10,632,000 pure Indians and Mestizos lived in 61,284 rural pueblos. All but a handful of these pueblos and of their inhabitants were, for all practical purposes, dependent upon the large estates for the means of holding body and soul together. When the agrarian revolution came, there could be no doubt as to the way the land would go. Ideologically, sentimentally, administratively and practically, it would go to the pueblos. Thus was insured one of the great endeavors of decentralized democracy of our age, the *ejidal* program of Mexico.

From what individual source, within the Revolution, came the *ejidal* program, which was so very much more than the mere program of restoring land to the people? Madero, the humanitarian *hacendado* who led the Revolution in 1910-11, did not conceive of the program. It was no part of the rather inchoate, primarily political, agenda of the Revolution at the beginning. The individual source which announced the program and fought it through was a poor peon, or share cropper, who could not read nor write. Emiliano Zapata supported Madero ardently. When Madero lagged in the agrarian program which he had accepted from Zapata but had not genuinely affirmed, Zapata went into rebellion; the Indians thronged to his support, and soon he controlled the states of Morelos, Jalisco, Guerrero, Puebla and at times the Federal District of Mexico itself. Madero endeavored to break Zapata with the army. Zapata struck back with the *Plan de Avala*: The lands should be redistributed now, and the *ejidos* should receive them; if the government did not act, the people would take the lands by

direct action. The people—the Indians—proceeded to take them. This was in 1911.

Then the Huerta counter-revolution overthrew Madero. Venustiano Carranza launched a revolt against Huerta; Zapata joined Carranza. In 1914, Huerta was driven out, and after five weeks of chaos, Carranza assumed the executive power. Carranza had pledged himself to Zapata's platform; and under Zapata's pressure—almost, Zapata's bludgeoning—he promulgated the *Plan de Vera Cruz*, involving the distribution of the land to the *ejidos*.

But Carranza failed to act for the *ejidos*. From 1915 to 1920, only 190 pueblos received land; only 180,000 hectares were distributed to 48,000 *ejiditarios*. Zapata went into revolt again.

In 1920, General Obregón and his followers in Sonora declared war; their pledge was to make good on the Revolution's commitments. They swept the country; Carranza perished; Obregón became President.

Still the agrarian revolution was pressed falteringly. Twenty years after the enactment of the *Plan de Vera Cruz*, in 1935, fewer than eight million hectares had been returned to the pueblos. The *ejidal* plan through which the villages obtained their land is, with slight modifications, the present way; hence, at this point it is outlined.

Through its Executive Committee a village petitioned for a restitution, or, as the case might be, a *dotation* (a *de novo*) grant of land. The petition went to the State Agrarian Commission, which took a census, surveyed the available lands, and made other needed investigations. The State Commission reported to the Governor, who was required by the law to render his decision within five months. If the Governor's decision was affirmative, the village was given provisional possession; if the Governor's decision was negative, the village could appeal through that Commission to the President of the Republic. On receiving the recommendation of the National Commission, the President (if acting affirmatively) made definite and final the village's possession. The village received its land as a matter of legal right, not of privilege.

Where a village could prove title, the village received all land covered by its regenerated title, with minor exceptions. In the absence of proved title, enough land was expropriated to insure to each family and every person over 18 years of age from three to five hectares of irrigated or "humid" land, or four to six hectares of good dry-farming land, or six to eight hectares of dry-farming land less good. In totaling the land which should

go to a village, the professional class, government employees, persons whose wealth exceeded 1,000 pesos, and persons whose salary exceeded 75 pesos a month, were omitted from the count.

Under usual conditions, haciendas or other landholdings of only *moderate* size could not be expropriated.

The expropriations were not paid for in cash but in special government bonds. The bonds were negotiable, and could be used to pay certain classes of taxation. The face value of these bonds equaled the declared value of the land as sworn to by the owner for tax purposes in prior years, plus 10 per cent. In practice, the expropriation was a mitigated confiscation; but these same *hacendados*, and their predecessors in interest, had confiscated the land and also the lives of the people for generations or hundreds of years.

The *ejidal* lands were inalienable, and the title was communal. The *ejido* could use its lands through collective enterprise or through granting use-rights to its members; but it could not convey title to an individual member.

The *ejido* built its schoolhouse. The State or the Federal Government supplied the teacher. "Cultural missions," serving groups of *ejidos* for periods of weeks or months, toured the Republic. Modest public works of every kind were carried out by *ejidos* here and there. Eight hundred thousand heads of families, more than four million individual Indians, lived on the *ejidal* lands, ruled themselves there, breathed freedom.

Yet in 1935, twenty years after the *Plan de Vera Cruz* had been enacted, clouds of doubt brooded over the *ejidal* movement. For two-thirds of the big *haciendas* of Mexico had yielded not a hectare of land to the *ejidos*; land distribution lagged; and among the 4,500 *ejidos* (approximately), were thousands whose land and water supply was too meager to permit a contribution to the national economy.

Education, though depending, by and large, on the school and the school alone, advanced only haltingly. No adequate credit system existed to make possible the acquisition of capital goods by the *ejidos*.

Mexico needed, desperately, production *with conservation* from all of its agricultural lands. *Ejidal* economic planning, in the absence of capital goods, was handicapped. *Ejidal* enterprise was suffocated.

Among those who knew that there was greatness in the *ejidal* movement, there was a strong intensity of hope and of fear. I quote here from an unpublished notation of my own, written after a third visit to Mexico, in 1936.

"The regenerated *ejido* is not comparable to the Pueblos of New Mexico and Arizona. These United States Pueblos have existed in unbroken continuity as complex, autonomous societies. Their land-base was impaired in the nineteenth century but never destroyed. Their flow as co-operative commonwealths has never stopped. By contrast, the Mexican *ejidos* have behind them four centuries of white rule; their members have just now emerged from being forced-labor slaves, with no freedom of choice, no chance to take responsibility.

"Transition from native co-operative living to co-operative economic enterprise of present-world type is not automatic, and usually is not swift. Its feasibility, in the case of Indians, is being demonstrated in hundreds of places in the United States and Alaska today. Mexico will make the same demonstration; but if, somehow, capital-goods credit, within a credit system designed to be educational, could be furnished in Mexico, the transition would be accelerated. And the *time factor* is tragically important. The future of the structure and spirit of Mexico may be determined in early years by the intensity of success and the rate of spread of the *ejidos*. The entire Western world should give attention and encouragement to the *ejidal* movement; for it is a movement in behalf of us all.

"The *ejidal* movement is, of course, only one component of the Mexican revolution, though it may be the profoundest one. And it has values and results going beyond the statistical and tangible. *The spirit of the Indians of Mexico is now once more facing the sky.* We who first went into Mexico in 1930 will always remember the experience. Utterly poor men, these Indians yet were touched with light. Nothing could exhaust their merriment, their hospitality. After hundreds of years of enslavement, they had made themselves free. In those years, and just recently visiting this and that *ejido*, this and that rural school, one glimpsed what thousands of others have glimpsed—the vista of a sweeter, deeper day for the Western world. The *ejidal* program has not failed; and it is one element in a mighty event which has not failed. But those who know its greatness should also know its desperate difficulties. The *ejido* is Mexico's road to a better and lasting time. It is the kind of road that the other Republics with massive Indian populations must travel. It is a road to be built with great creative striving. The Indians are building it, but they cannot do without help."

New revolutionary energy was the need. New passion, new vision, new administrative will. Lázaro Cárdenas supplied them. He became President at the end of 1934. In the six following years, he established the agrarian revolution. He did very much besides. He established, once and for all, Mexico's national dominion over its natural resources, including oil. Working with the intellectually subtle, the brilliant, audacious Vincente

Lombardo Toledano, he built organized labor into unity and power. Through millions—actually millions—of personal, face-to-face contacts with the Indians in every Mexican state, he built confidence and power into them. In 1940, though overwhelmingly the people's and the nation's choice, he refused to violate the constitutional clause against presidential self-succession; and he refused, and refuses still, to seek to dominate his successors from behind the scenes.

There has been no greater leader of any people in this age than Cárdenas; perhaps there has been none whose heart was so rich and so pure. Future time possibly will measure his achievement on behalf of the Indians as being second only to that of Las Casas.

He is linked, too, with Miguel Hidalgo and José Maria Morelos and Emiliano Zapata; and far back in time, with Don Vasco de Quiroga of Michoacan. Michoacan, incidentally, was Cárdenas' home. He was governor of that state before he became president.

Cárdenas resumed the distribution of lands to the pueblos. By the end of 1938, 13,000 Indian communities had been re-vested with land. There were 1,600,000 *ejidatarios*, representing nearly 8,000,000 beneficiaries of the *ejidal* lands. Twenty-three million hectares had been confirmed to *ejidal* possession and these made up one-third of the crop land of Mexico.

The problem of credit was a difficult one, not wholly solved by Cárdenas. The beginnings of the *Banco Nacional de Crédito Ejidal* were made in 1935. This bank operated through Ejidal Credit Societies, membership in which was voluntary and which were collectively liable for the credit obligations of their members. The bank was much more than a lending institution. Its personnel of 2,350 technicians worked with the credit societies in the formulation of farm and industrial plans, and only on the basis of such plans were loans made at all. The bank stored the commercial products of the societies in regional warehouses; the loans were repaid from the sales of these products, and the profit was turned back to the societies. Long-term loans for capital goods were made; in 1938, of the total loaned, 9 per cent went for capital goods equipment. Groups of *ejidos* were federated for loans going to public utility needs.

Under the statute, the credit societies were required to set aside 5 per cent of their gross returns as a "social fund." The credit societies controlled their social funds, but the bank advised them. They were used for health services, for the installation of water supply, for the purchase of the material for school

buildings, community halls, and so on, built through contributed labor; for the financing of distributive co-operative enterprises, and for any common benefit. The social fund of the credit societies totaled 3,500,000 pesos in 1938.

The credit problem of the *ejidos* was met, but never fully met. In 1939, of 13,000 *ejidos*, only 5,200 had credit societies or were receiving loans; of the 1,600,000 *ejiditarios*, fewer than 500,000 were members of credit societies. The reason lay in the operating rule of the Ejidal Bank, a sound and necessary rule. Loans were made to credit societies only on the basis of farm and industrial plans which on analysis were deemed adequate to insure the repayment of the loans. Thousands of *ejidos* possessed lands so inadequate, or so remote from markets, that valid loan applications simply could not be formulated. In practice, the Ejidal Bank did frequently make loans which were not economically justified; it pushed beyond the margin of safety, so that its delinquencies ran as high as 12 per cent a year. Basically, this incompleteness of the *ejidal* credit system, and its high delinquency rate, was the result of the fact that Mexico did not have enough good land to go around, and that the land program, enormously extended as it was under Cárdenas, still was unfinished. It is unfinished today.

Mexico entered dubious times after Cárdenas. But he left the *ejidal* movement too strong, too proud, and too well implemented to be destroyed. Before Cárdenas, the faces of the Indians were turned toward the sky. Through him, they traveled far on the road of their hope.

Part Three > NORTH OF THE RIO GRANDE

CHAPTER 9

The Indians of the United States

TO KNOW the spirit of the Indians of the United States is to know another world. It is to pass beyond the Cartesian age, beyond the Christian age, beyond the Aristotelian age, beyond all the dichotomies we know, and into the age of wonder, the age of the dawn man. There all the dichotomies are melted away: joy requires sorrow, and sorrow, joy; man and society and the world are one; fantasy and the old, hard wisdom of experience join in the rituals, the moralizing tales, the songs, the myths; idealism and ideality are joined with searching and undeviating practicality. And the child is joined with the man.

The story of North America's Indians, down the centuries, brings into relief three Indian characteristics, attainable by average men only through the application of a profound social art. They are psychological maturity, many-sidedness, and intensity within tranquillity. The tranquillity includes, not excludes, life abundant and the awareness of tragic fate.

The night he died, in the Danubian marshlands where the barbarians advanced on the Roman Empire, Marcus Aurelius gave to the army its watchword: *Equanimitas*. But this was an equanimity withdrawn from the press of life, from all the splendor and terror of it. The tribal Indian's equanimity is poised within the press of life and rejects nothing of the glory and doom. It is poised, too, between the "twin eternities" of a racial past not dead and a future already alive, on-drawing and event-commanding through the action of the human will implanted far onward within future time.

I had supposed that the tracing of the Indian record in what is now the United States would be the easiest part of this book. I had lived with its subject matter for twenty-five years; it was home ground. But as it has turned out, it is the most difficult

part of all. I have searched myself to find the reason for this difficulty. It does not lie in the prolixity of material or in anything controversial in its nature. Prolix the material is. But the movement of events was fairly uniform, fairly explainable, on the whole simple. As for controversy, it scarcely exists in the usual historical sense. What the events were, together with their causes and consequences, are hardly in dispute, whether among scholars or popular historians.

The events are hardly in dispute—but right there lies the source of the difficulty. It is not a matter of controversy among historians. It is an utter disparity between, on the one hand, the impressions made by the events on the historians, and, on the other hand, the personal and social inwardness of Indian life. The events seem to rush in one dark bloody avalanche, then to switch to a still gray monotone, then to hesitate. Thus history sees the facts; thus they were; yet within the Indian, so long as his societies endured, they were not thus.

Whence my difficulty, finally resolved within myself. It was a resistance against being one more narrator about the Indians, that stopped me. For I felt that I would do again what so many narrators had done before me. The problem was to catch what I could of the other side, and, in catching it, to relate it to a meaning for all of us. Let us remember that the Indian's societies did in fact endure until well past the middle of the nineteenth century; that many of them endured through the whole dark age, on into the present day of comparative brightness; and that even when societies, viewed as describable institutions, are destroyed from without, their persuasiveness may go on for a long time within the soul, even for many generations.

European contact with the Indians north of Mexico set into motion events very different from the Caribbean, Mexican, Central American and Peruvian histories. One European epoch encountered two Indian epochs. South of the Rio Grande the Spaniards encountered the epoch of imperial consolidations. But north of the Rio Grande, in what was to be the United States, six hundred Indian national societies existed, each complete, many-sided, self-reliant, profound in its social-spiritual endowment.

This contrast led to subjection and enslavement in the one area, and in the other to hundreds of years of warfare, with no successful enslavement and even, to the end, no yielding by the Indians to anything but the sheer fact of being physically overwhelmed. The cultural events contrasted, because their bases of origin contrasted. South of the Rio Grande, the empires had set

into motion a trend toward homogeneity. White conquest accelerated the trend. North of the Rio Grande, no such trend had been established at all; and as physical conquest by the white world advanced over the bloody marches of Indian resistance, Indian social individuality held its own, and even deepened its consciousness of itself.

Is it to be wondered at that the Indians north of the Rio Grande have always awakened a strange yet intimate excitement in the white man's soul? They speak to us from out of our long foregone home, and what hears them is the changeless, eternal part of us, imprisoned and immured by our social epoch even as the Indian societies were imprisoned and immured by us in the century behind. Just as our own buried depths predict a world future and belong to it, so these outwearing, ancient Indian societies predict a world future and belong to it.

At the time of discovery, the region that is now the United States contained some one million Indians. The total for both North and South America was perhaps 30 millions. Today, of the 25 to 30 millions of Indians in the Hemisphere, the United States (including Alaska) count 400,000, or one-seventieth of the world's Indian population. By the quantitative test, therefore, this book should devote only four or five pages to the Indians of the United States, their history past and present, and the white man's traffic with them. Their numbers are fewer than those of the city of Rochester, New York, and many historical works treat of them accordingly. In their *Basic History of the United States*, Charles and Mary Beard concede to the Indians seven references in three pages out of five hundred.

But I shall disregard the quantitative test here, and this not merely for the reason that I know the Indians of the United States better than the other Indians. Nor is the reason that more is known, historically and in the present, about the United States Indians than about the far more numerous other Indians, for the data upon the others are abundant. The true reason, I hope, will appear through this brief record.

The million Indians of the United States and Alaska were formed within more than six hundred distinct societies, in geographical situations ranging from temperate oceansides to arctic ice, from humid swamps to frozen tundras, from eastern woodlands to western deserts. In peace and war these hundreds of societies acted and reacted on one another over ages, and large numbers of them possessed a secondary language that was international among them, the sign language. But no vast consolidations, like those of Mexico, Middle America and the

Andes, ever embraced them, transposing power, leadership and responsibility from the primary, complete societies into centralized nations to be destroyed by time or conquest. Unbroken and unwaning, the primary social group in what is now the United States lived on, worked on, evolved on, from Neolithic or Paleolithic time to the white man's arrival.

At the time of white arrival there was no square mile unoccupied or unused. The six hundred or so Indian dialects were vehicles of more than that number of tribal societies. These societies existed in perfect ecological balance with the forest, the plain, the desert, the waters, and the animal life. These societies desired population totals large enough to insure their continuance; this desire was one among many factors which assured caution and moderateness in their warfare. Beyond wanting enough members to insure tribal continuance, the tribes did not have statistical ambitions. They valued quality, not numbers, in men.

In what is now the United States, warfare, like predation in wild life, functioned toward the ecological harmony; and more complexly than predation in wild life, it functioned toward the shaping of virile, structured, unafraid, truly noble personality, which counted one's separate life and fate as of no great moment.

Yet while Indian warfare was limited, not unlimited or excessive, the Indian and his society "lived dangerously." The extreme of effort, of discipline and resourcefulness, hardest of realism, might at any time be demanded of every member of the little society. The Indian made it his business to have fullness of life within material meagerness, and within a deep insecurity which his wisdom did not even want to see terminated. The abode of this insecurity was not within his own soul or within his group life, but within the world of war, drought, flood, storm, and pestilence. He made, through his social institution and social art, this *external insecurity* into the condition of *inward security*—individually-inward and group-inward.

The white invasion came. Indian warfare enormously increased and Indian insecurity became incalculably intensified, but that profound training and conditioning, and that affirmation of the will to live dangerously while living in impassioned tranquillity, did not collapse. Only with the actual dissolution of his societies could the Indian's life-power start to fail; and this life-power knew how to control the effects of all bad events, within the soul and within the human relation.

Through historical accident, the region now the United States

became possessed by no single conquering white nation but by the Spanish, Dutch, French and English. These competed with one another, and the Indian tribes were essential factors in the rival imperialisms across three centuries. So it came about that, though intertribal wars were incalculably multiplied, and Indian warfare was perverted from its ancient ecological, educative and moderate rules, and changed into total war driven by irrelevant, white-imperialistic aims, yet the Indian societies were not at first proscribed. "Indirect rule," and a severely limited indirect rule, with high status for the native societies, was the calculated policy of the trade-competing and warring imperialisms, particularly those of England and France. This policy had become standardized and codified in treaties and statutes at dates long prior to the American Revolution; and the United States incorporated it as the basic, theoretical law of Indian relations.

After the day of rival imperialisms was over, however, there remained only one expanding empire, race-prejudiced and with a boundless land hunger. The former policies toward Indian societies and Indianhood became reversed: a policy at first implicit and sporadic, then explicit, elaborately rationalized and complexly implemented, of the extermination of Indian societies and of every Indian trait, of the eventual liquidation of Indians, became the formalized policy, law and practice.

But it was not until the white centuries had five-sixths completed themselves that the planned, implemented destruction of the Indian societies as the means of breaking the Indian's soul began. The full intensity of this policy and practice of social destruction against Indians lasted only sixty years and then was stopped. Its policy of mutilation and starvation reached deep; but it had not time enough to kill a thing so strong.

If the reader holds in mind these considerations, he will find only the more distressing the deeds of the white man in the United States toward the Indian, and the presumptions and lusts which inspired the deeds. But he will know that in his true citadel and home—his tribal society, and his soul—the Indian went on, transmuting hard and faithless events into spiritual good. The Indian's spiritual and social hygiene remained triumphant. Pain beyond any possible telling, depopulation, the loss of homeland, the loss of any foreseeable future—all these he endured, and did not try to tell himself that they were less than they were. He kept his humor, his pride, his values of aristocracy, his power of love and his faith in gods who do not hate. Betrayed, overwhelmed, subjected to scorning hate, he was

never inwardly defeated. So the bleak record did not mean, to him, what it meant externally and what it must mean to you and me. Sadness deeper than the imagination can hold—sadness of men completely conscious, watching the universes being destroyed by a numberless and scorning foe—such sadness the tribal Indian knew through the long event. His spaciousness of life, the slow, immense rhythms of it, its tidal inflow and outflow of the boundless deep, and its spontaneity of joy which suffused the wise old, the earnest young and the child—these never failed.

Are we willing to know the Indian's secrets? The creative potency of human societies encounters, in most of social science, a glassy eye.

Yet what is there in our world like the achievement of the Indian? Perhaps thus the Druid society met its fate; we do not know. William Morris depicts such an achievement by a Teutonic society, in his *The House of the Wolvings*. Some Christian monastic orders, men and women, have now and then attained this creative potency. In the United States, it was hundreds of tiny Indian societies which held themselves and their individuals at such a level through hundreds of years on to the last hour; and among these hundreds, a goodly number of the societies triumphed past the end of the ravaging age, and are operative today.

In *Black Elk Speaks*, one of the classics on Indians, John G. Neihardt¹ records the memories and thoughts of Black Elk, an illiterate, aged Dakota Sioux. Black Elk was speaking thirty years after the final crushing of the Oglala Sioux society as an entity, but during the time when the fragments of that society were being pursued into the very fastnesses of the soul.

"And I," said Black Elk, "to whom so great a vision was given in my youth—you see me now a pitiful old man who has done nothing, for the nation's hoop is broken and scattered. There is no center any longer, and the tree is dead."

Black Elk had just been describing, circumstantially, but without any taint of hate or bitterness, the Wounded Knee massacre of 1890 which had taken place when the Indians had assembled to witness a prohibited religious ceremony. "We followed down the dry gulch, and what we saw was terrible. Dead and wounded (Indian) women and children and little babies were scattered all along where they had been trying to run away. The soldiers had followed along the gulch, as they ran, and murdered them

¹From *Black Elk Speaks: Being the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux* by John G. Neihardt. 1932. By permission of the publishers, William Morrow & Company, Inc.

in there. Sometimes they were in heaps because they had huddled together, and some were scattered all along. Sometimes bunches of them had been killed and torn to pieces where the wagon guns hit them. I saw a little baby trying to suck its mother, but she was bloody and dead."

Black Elks' narrative of Wounded Knee brought to its end his reminiscence. "After the conclusion," Neihardt writes, "Black Elk and our party were sitting at the north edge of Cunny Table, looking off across the Badlands ('the beauty and the strangeness of the earth,' as the old man expressed it). Pointing at Harney Peak looking black above the far sky-rim, Black Elk said: 'There, when I was young, the spirits took me in my vision to the center of the earth and showed me all the good things in the sacred hoop of the world. I wish I could stand up there in the flesh before I die, for there is something I want to say to the Six Grandfathers.'"

They took Black Elk to Harney Peak. I quote further from Neihardt's record, both because it is so fine in expression and because it is so representative:

Having dressed and painted himself as he was in his great vision, Black Elk faced the west, holding the sacred pipe before him in his right hand. Then he sent forth a voice; and a thin, pathetic voice it seemed in that vast space around us.

"Hey-a-a-hey! Hey-a-a-hey! Hey-a-a-hey! Hey-a-a-hey! Grandfather, Great Spirit, once more behold me on earth and lean to hear my feeble voice. You lived first, and you are older than all need, older than all prayer. All things belong to you—the two-leggeds, the four-leggeds, the wings of the air and all green things that live. You have set the powers of the four quarters to cross each other. The good road and the road of difficulties you have made to cross; and where they cross, the place is holy. Day in and day out, forever, you are the life of things.

"Therefore I am sending a voice, Great Spirit, my Grandfather, forgetting nothing you have made, the stars of the universe and the grasses of the earth.

"You have said to me, when I was still young and could hope, that in difficulty I should send a voice four times, once for each quarter of the earth, and you would hear me.

"Today I send a voice for a people in despair.

"You have given me a sacred pipe, and through this I should make my offering. You see it now.

"From the west, you have given me the cup of living water and the sacred bow, the power to make life and to destroy. You have given me a sacred wind and the herb from where the white giant lives—the cleansing power and the healing. The day-break star and the pipe, you have given from the east; and from the south, the nation's sacred hoop and the tree that was to bloom. To the

center of the world you have taken me and showed the goodness and the beauty and the strangeness of the greening earth, the only mother, and there the spirit-shapes of things, as they should be, you have shown me and I have seen. At the center of the sacred hoop you have said that I should make the tree to bloom.

"With tears running, O Great Spirit, Great Spirit, my Grandfather—with running eyes I must say now that the tree has never bloomed. A pitiful old man, you see me here and I have fallen away and have done nothing. Here at the center of the world, where you took me when I was young and taught me; here, old, I stand, and the tree is withered, my Grandfather!

"Again, and maybe the last time on this earth, I recall the great vision you sent me. It may be that some little root of the sacred tree still lives. Nourish it then, that it may leaf and bloom and fill with singing birds. Hear me, not for myself but for my people; I am old. Hear me that they may once more go back into the sacred hoop and find the good road, the shielding tree."

Long ago I would have suspected an element of the histrionic in Black Elk's words; or that Neihardt was partly inventing so balanced and rich a harmony; or that Black Elk was a solitary and exceptional mystical genius. Years of being among Indians of many societies, as one vitally related to them, have shown me otherwise. Perfection of speech goes not where literacy goes, for average men; it goes where unwritten language goes. The poetic imagery among tribal Indians was and is as unfailing as Homer's imagery. Black Elk's telling of his life shows that he gave all that he had to the Sioux, his people; and they received and matched all that he had in response.

The Sioux are Plains Indians and famous fighters. The Shawnees are forest Indians and also famous fighters through their history. Shawnee society appears never to have numbered more than two thousand members, but its warriors fought all over what is now Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio. Tenskwatawa, the Prophet, and Tecumseh, his twin brother, who just after 1800 tried to rally all Indian tribes against the white invasion, were Shawnees. They failed, and subsequently the Shawnees were split asunder, the "Absentee Shawnees" settling in Texas, whence they were driven out into Indian Territory (Oklahoma) in 1839. The Absentee Shawnees numbered fewer than five hundred souls, and it is their world which is described by Thomas Wildcat Alford, and recorded by Florence Drake.²

Alford's memories commence after the millenniums of Shawnee warfare had ended, but the turbulence and peril en-

²From *Civilization* by Florence Drake, 1936. (One of the 26 volumes in the *Civilization of the American Indian* series.) By permission of the Publishers, University of Oklahoma Press, c1936.

veloping the Shawnees had not ended. They were being swept into that forced land-allotment, designed to dispossess the pacified Indians and to wither their community life, which did in fact largely accomplish its ends. What was their inward, spiritual condition? What was the human relationship within the little group?

Alford quotes, in Shawnee, the two basic rules by which he grew up.

"Do not kill or injure your neighbor, for it is not him that you injure, you injure yourself.

"Do not wrong or hate your neighbor, for it is not him that you wrong, you wrong yourself. Moneto, the Grandmother, the Supreme Being, loves him also as she loves you.

"Standards of conduct were just as rigid as the laws of any other people, but force was seldom used to enforce good conduct. *Each person was his own judge.* Deceitfulness was a crime. We lived according to our own standards and principles, not for what others might think of us. Absolute honesty toward each other was the basis of character . . . Indian parents gave few commands, because they were advocates of freedom of action and thought, but absolute obedience was exacted . . . All our histories, traditions, codes, were passed from one generation to another by word of mouth. Our memories must be kept clear and accurate, our observation must be keen, our self-control absolute . . . A child would strive with all his might to win praise (from a parent or elder), while he would be indifferent to bodily punishment.

"Our people appreciated skill or knowledge of any kind, but naturally they thought more of the wisdom that formed the background of our racial life."

The sundered bands of the Shawnees met again after more than half a century of separation. "Although the two bands had been separated for more than fifty years, each had held so tenaciously to its creeds, customs and traditions that neither had changed at all. They took up their life together with no jar or discord and again they were an undivided people."

The Shawnee's life was spacious, unhurrying; deeply rooted, which many uprootings did not starve because the undying society, not any material condition, was their soil. It was a life of joyousness and unfailing nobility through the whole of a very complex human relationship; of freedom within flexible orderliness; and of such a love for the Shawnee social institution as plants and creatures have for the sunlight, the giver of life. And in Alford's account there is not one note of hate, bitterness or fear toward the white oppressor, only this remark: "If cunning and deception were resorted to in dealings with

white people, it was pitted against something that the red man felt powerless to cope with on common ground—something for which he had no name." Thus would Inca or Aztec have spoken.

Two more examples are given of that almost deathless inwardness of the Indian societies which mastered the ruin that seemed to overwhelm them through the hundreds of years. One is found in the story told by the Osage Indian, Tse-shin-ga-wa-da-in-ga, or Playful-calf, to Francis La Flesche.⁸

The date is 1912, just before, in Oklahoma, the fatal flood of gold (from oil discoveries)—\$265,000,000 in sixteen years—started to drown the 2,000 Osages.

"My son," said Playful-calf, "the ancient Non-hon-shin-ga have handed down to us in songs, *wi-gi-e*, ceremonial forms, symbols, the many things they learned of the mysteries that surround us on all sides. All these things they learned through their power of 'wa-thi-gthon,' the power to search with the mind. They speak of the light of the day by which the earth and all living things that dwell thereon are influenced; of the mysteries of the darkness of night that reveal to us all the great bodies of the upper world, each of which forever travels in a circle of its own unimpeded by the others. They searched for a long time for the source of life, and at last they came to the thought that it issues from an invisible creative power to which they applied the name 'Wa-kon-da.' "

After a few moments of silent reflection, the old man continued: "Many of the sayings of the Non-hon-shin-ga who lived long ago have come down to us and have been treasured by the people as expressions coming from men who have been in close touch with the mysterious power whom the people had learned to worship and to reverence. Moreover, the men who uttered these sayings had long since departed for the spirit land and were regarded by their descendants as Wa-kon-da-gi, that is, sacred and mysterious persons. These sayings had been transmitted in ritual form, and during the passage of years had been jealously guarded against desecration by those persons who succeeded in memorizing them and had taken care to teach them only to such pupils as manifested a proper spirit of reverence for things sacred."

One day, as Playful-calf was reciting to La Flesche titles of the songs, there was a prolonged pause, while La Flesche waited pencil in hand. This pause was unusual for such a wide-awake

⁸From *The Osage Tribe: Rite of the Wa-Xo-Be* by Francis La Flesche. 1928. Bureau of American Ethnology.

man as Playful-calf, and La Flesche wondered if the old man had suddenly been taken sick. When he looked at Playful-calf's face, there were tears on his cheeks. When Playful-calf had composed himself he looked at La Flesche with a smile, and said: "My son, a sudden remembrance of the old Non-hon-shin-ga brought tears to my eyes. They were kind to us, those old men, when I was working hard to learn from them the sacred songs. As they sat around the fireplace, I fed the fire to make it shed light and warmth, and I ran to the spring to fetch water for them when they were thirsty. By these little services I won their affection, and they were gentle and patient with me when they taught me."

In his report La Flesche describes the symbolic beauty and profundity, and the extreme complexity, of one of the ceremonies he later was allowed to witness and which Playful-calf explained to him as it went along. "The object of Playful-calf in having me witness the ceremony did not fail of its purpose," wrote La Flesche, "for gradually it became clear to me that the rite as a whole was of a cosmic character; that it was a dramatization of the movements of certain cosmic forces whose combined power brought forth material life upon the earth and set it in perpetual motion." The ceremony was in fact a sacred dance-drama and a prayer; through its perfect, tranquil but intense enactment, not the individuals alone, but the tribe, commingled with the universe and contributed, not merely received, meaning and power.

A final example of the all-surmounting inwardness of the tribal societies comes from New Mexico. In 1926 I was present with a friend at an Indian gathering at which we were the only whites. A diary entry which I made the following day, was given to the Indian committees of the House and Senate in support of a bill (which became law) insuring to the tribe, for a hundred years to come, the exclusive use of its sacred area in the National Forest. Various opponents had hinted that the secret occasion out in the mountain-wild was an orgy of pornography and sadism, and therefore the tribe, after much hesitation, had asked the two of us to come for this one time. The diary note follows.

Twelve miles from the Pueblo, at 10,500 feet elevation, on the flank of Taos Sacred Mountain, is the first of two ceremonial grounds. Three hundred members went up to the ceremony. The Pueblo contains a few over six hundred souls.

They went as whole families, including babes-in-arms a year old. A few of the tribe walked; these were old men, reproducing

the custom of times before the horse. Some were unable to go, being held at the Pueblo by community tasks or by work in the fields.

There appeared some alterations due to historical contacts with the whites. The great lean-tos, built by the old men and women, had canvas for roofing, instead of buffalo hides. There were some woolen blankets in place of the ancient cotton; and in some cases, not the complete moccasin but store-shoe tops on moccasin soles. The horse provided a striking esthetic addition. Two hundred or more horses were pastured in the five-acre glade. Until nearly midnight, belated arrivals were coming in, riding through absolute blackness on the steep, craggy and disused mountain trail which has led to the ceremonial ground for thousands of years. Far off the horses would sense the coming horse, and the high, far-flung whinny of welcome from hundreds of horses would wing across the human song. All night this silvery whinnying from hundreds of throats was flung across the ceremonial ground.

Otherwise, what transpired was unchanged from immemorial age. Even the Plains Indian elements of Rio Grande Pueblo Indian culture were largely absent; no feathered bonnets, for example, were worn. No white eyes, nor even alien Indian eyes, had witnessed this occasion before; and after the cry to the Spirits had been sent forth in the opening song, we two witnesses were as non-existent; and when at dawn we and the tribe departed opposite ways, there was no saying of good-by.

First, and throughout, was the supreme esthetic quality. Yet concerning it, as concerning stranger impressions of that night, descriptive words are nearly useless. Log fires threw a rising and falling glow on robed moving masses of human forms and on great aspen trunks. The lean-tos caught every glow. They were made of whole, thirty-foot trees, brought from outside the ceremonial ground, the tree-trunks two feet apart; and resting on them, great canvases. They rose from different levels of ground, tier behind tier, irregularly centering toward the fires. Under the lean-tos had been built dais-like structures; and there in the fire-glow clustered all who were not at any moment dancing. Here the gorgeousness of the Pueblo color-hunger was seen; women and infants wore colors which in the transfiguration of the fire-glow were rich as Chinese decorations. All the tribe's wampum, silver and turquoise was worn.

The fires lit the dance ground. Here were no colors, other than the fire's own color reflected from white or dusky robes. Here, with personal qualities shrouded, moved scores, hundreds of ghosts. They moved like masses of smoke, like wind made visible, like masses of cloud heaving over this (to the Indians) sacred mountain. No casual motion, no gesture of one to another, ever appeared; all was a mass rhythm; but an evolving rhythm which changed a hundred times during the night. Among the figures was a woman who danced all night with her baby on her shoulder.

The song went out from fifty, sometimes a hundred singers. From ten o'clock until dawn, there was never a full minute's interlude. Only once were the dancers still. That was when the mass singing ceased and one powerful voice for seven minutes sang alone.

How in many Pueblo sacred dances the oblivion of self and the corresponding inrush of power becomes almost terrifying, is known to all who frequent the dances. But even the Red Deer Dance is brief, its intensity faint, compared with this dance. The occasion as a whole was a summoning by the tribe of many spirits of the wild, elements or cosmic kin known from ages gone by; and a summoning from within the breast of capacities and loves which had formed the ancient life and must sustain its present and future. As the hours moved on, a displacement of human and mystical factors seemed to take place. The rejoicing was not only a human rejoicing; and that marvelous ever-renewed, ever-increasing, ever-changing leap and rush of song was not only human song. A threshold had been shifted, forces of the wild and of the universe had heard the call and had taken the proffered dominion. That is what the tribe believed; that is how it seemed—physical actuality in a thunderstorm or amid ocean breakers seems no more certain. Empirically, it can only be said that a strange release of energies took place, that the dynamic potentiality of ancient beliefs was realized, and that there was expressed a rejoicing, passionate and yet almost coldly exalted, and the fleshly raiment appeared to fall away.

On this night at this place, the spirit of Pueblo religion could have been mistaken by none. Forces or beings normally invisible, only half-personal yet connecting with the hidden central springs of the empirical life, are a dominating fact in the Pueblo (in the tribal Indian) mind. The Indian's relationship to these forces or beings is not chiefly one of petition or adoration or dread, but of a seeking and sharing in joy. It is a partnership in an eternal effort whereby, from some remote place of finding and communion, the human and the mechanical universes alike are sustained. A tribal religious illusion? Not the Indians nor can we prove or disprove it till the world ends. A primitive animistic fiction? Nevertheless, a fiction thus late (perhaps thus soon) endowing a disinherited race with an eagle's wings.

It seemed that among the necessary illusions or fictions since man, the creator, began, there could have been none more adequate for gathering all of a race's life into one self-transcending, quietly and permanently nourishing passion, than this fiction unloosed and re-affirmed in this place which might have been a Grecian temple. But a Grecian temple before the dance and song were gone, before the mural colors had faded from pillars and roof, before the oracle was stilled and Pan was dead. And before the Attic social age had passed away.

Conquest North of the Rio Grande

NORTH of the Rio Grande, the Indian record begins in Labrador. There, in 1501, came the Portuguese explorer Gaspar Cortereal. He kidnapped fifty-seven Indians to be sold as slaves, but on the way home his own vessel sank in a storm and he and his men and the Indians chained in the hold were drowned together. A second vessel reached Portugal with seven Indians remaining alive. The Portuguese had found the natives curious, hospitable, helpful. (That was to be true of every initial contact in North America thereafter.) They gave the bleak country the name Labrador signifying "the place with an abundance of labor material."

Next on the record is the old man Ponce de León who came to Florida seeking his fountain of youth. The Indians received him in a friendly enough way. But when he returned, eight years later, he found that their attitude had changed. For in the meantime other Spanish adventurers had ravaged the shores of the Gulf of Mexico. And the year previous one Lucas Vázquez de Ayllon, an *encomendero* who had played his part in the depopulation of Haiti by way of slavery in the mines, had raided the shores of Chicora (now Georgia and South Carolina) and kidnapped more than a hundred Indians. One shipload of these was engulfed on the voyage to Haiti and the rest perished in the mines. So, when Ponce de León came again to Florida, the Indians warned him not to land. He landed and was killed along with many of his men, and the expedition beat a retreat.

The next great expedition was that of Hernando de Soto, who had been one of Pizarro's men in the conquest of Peru. There on one occasion he had displayed a sense of honor, crying out to Pizarro against the murder of Atahualpa, the kidnapped Inca emperor. Yet when he was welcomed by the North American Indians who were living in prosperity and peace, he outraged their hospitality.

While he was being fed and otherwise assisted by the Indians in what is now Arkansas, de Soto decided it was time "to make the Indians stand in terror of the Spaniards." Not many leagues away the unsuspecting Nilco Indians had their abode, "five or six thousand of them" living in one large town. De Soto sent his forces against the Nilcos and so surprised them that, according to *The Narrative of the Expedition of de Soto* by "The Gentleman of Elvas," "there was not a man among them in readiness to draw a bow . . . About one hundred men were slain;

many were allowed to get away badly wounded, that they might strike terror into those who were absent." Some of the Spaniards killed all before them, young and old, according to the record.

In the Creek country (Georgia), a beautiful "Princess" received de Soto with ceremony and gifts. Promptly he kidnapped her as a hostage. Again and again, having been received with hospitality, he kidnapped the headmen or chiefs. He burned the villages, laid waste the cornfields, dragged Indians with him from place to place in chains as carriers, and applied torture to extract information. These are not stories told by the Indians. They come from the source material as recorded by de Soto's companion and eulogist, the Gentleman of Elvas. The lurid course ran on until 1542, when "on the twenty-first of May, departed this life the magnanimous, the virtuous, the intrepid captain, Don Hernando de Soto, Governor of Cuba and Adelantado of Florida."

De Soto had discovered the Mississippi River, and Indians from the Georgia coast to beyond the Mississippi had discovered the white man.

The next large episode of penetration and conquest, and rightly the most famous of them all, is that of Coronado, whose expedition traversed Arizona and New Mexico, discovered the Grand Canyon of the Colorado, made contact with all the Pueblo city-states, penetrated deep into Texas, and traversed Kansas to discover that mythical Quivira "whose cacique slept in the afternoons under a tree, lulled by the music of golden bells run by the wind." Quivira proved in fact to be the habitat of the friendly Wichita tribe and a place of no gold; so the romantic Indian who had led Coronado through hundreds of leagues of fantasy was garroted.

The principal source document of Coronado's adventure is that of Pedro de Castenado, a private soldier in Coronado's army; and it is one of the best documents of the conquest epoch. Castenado brings to life the Great Plains, the Indians of the Plains, and the unlimited herds of buffalo; the superb white wolves and the armies of jack rabbits traveling with the buffalo. His descriptions of Pueblo Indian life at the first white contact are invaluable.

Coronado was seeking gold, and he found none. He and his men, and the friars who accompanied them, were not intent on proselytizing. Most of the time, with one glaring exception, they practiced moderation toward the tribes.

Had Coronado discovered gold, we might have a different story. Since he did not, the expedition bears a favorable record.

Seeking only gold, Coronado had no wish for *encomiendas* or *repartimientos*. Failures, he and his men returned to Mexico. Yet it is important to record the fact that Coronado did not torture Indians to make them divulge where gold might be.

In general, Coronado kept faith with the tribes during his short time with them. He received everything from them, gave them back nothing except forbearance and some defective and wholly useless brass cannon. But unwittingly he gave them the horse, extinct for ages on the American continents. And to Spain he gave a measure of skeptical good will from the tribes at the northern border of her empire. Thus, Coronado's achievement endured. Apart from an immense increment to geography, including human geography, he supplied the first contribution to a sense of mutuality between the races, a sense whose development over the generations was to make some parts of the American Southwest a case apart in the bitter record of Indian relations.

Let us turn now from the Spaniards to the English, and to Sir Richard Grenville, immortalized as the captain of the little *Revenge* which battled the whole fleet of Spain and went down off the Azores coast. Grenville landed with seven ships in 1585 in what is now Virginia. He explored as far as the present Roanoke River, meeting hospitable Indians everywhere. Yet when one of his Indian hosts stole a small silver cup, Grenville sacked and burned the Indian's village. Thus, the Englishman started his course in that land which "still retained the virgin purity and plenty of the first creation, and its people their primitive innocence of life and manners."

The white settlement of Virginia actually began in 1607. Jamestown lay within the territory of the Powhatan Confederacy. Through the years when he could have struck the tiny colony with overwhelming power, Powhatan (Waukunsencaw) withheld his blow. Before he died in 1622, wave upon wave of new settlers had shifted the balance of power forever. The succeeding chief, Opechancanough, attempted the delayed onslaught, and failed. He attempted it again in 1644, when he was past ninety. Then the Powhatan Confederacy went down in flame and blood. Opechancanough, taken prisoner, and dying from age and fatigue, was needlessly shot by a guard. Hearing the murmur of the crowd around him, the aged chief requested that his eyelids be held open, that he might see the Governor. Gazing on the white leader he said, "Had it been my fortune to capture the governor of the English, I would not

meanly have exposed him as a show to my people."

In Massachusetts there was peace between white man and Indian for more than ten years after the Mayflower's landing in 1620. During the three previous years, an unidentified sickness had depopulated the eastern shore from Penobscot to Narragansett Bay. "The woods," remarked Cotton Mather, "were almost cleared of those pernicious creatures, to make room for a better growth." Massasoit, chief of the Wampancags, signing a treaty with the Pilgrims in 1621, remarked, "Englishmen, take that land, for none is left to occupy it. The Great Spirit . . . has swept its people from the face of the earth."

But the Massachusetts settlers eventually pressed westward while the Dutch settlers pressed eastward from the Hudson River. Crushed between them, the Pequot Indians of the Connecticut River valley made a gesture of self-defense. "A massacre!" came the cry. Before this, that devout professional soldier, John Mason, who had left Massachusetts, his sword having been hired by the Dutch, had been engaged in harrying the Pequots. Now from Boston there came to his support three vessels with men and guns. This was in the year 1637. It was not that Dutch and English loved one another so much. That score was to be settled after the Red Man had been put to rest.

Unsuspecting, the Pequots were sleeping within their palisade at a spot near the present New London. Daybreak was glimmering on their seventy wigwams. Mason approached with his replenished forces in the night. His men rushed the wigwams and kindled them with torches. As the Pequots fled through the burning wigwams they were riddled with musket fire. "God is over us," Captain Mason shouted, "He laughs His enemies to scorn, making them as a fiery oven." Dr. Cotton Mather furnished a written account of the massacre: "It was supposed that no less than six hundred Pequot souls were brought down to hell that day."

The Dutch were less assured of being God's chosen people than were the Puritans, but they had not much more mercy on the Indians. They did, however, establish the precedent of buying from the Indians their tribal land—a program to become important later. They paid the Indians seventeen dollars for Manhattan Island. Up to the year 1826, the United States and the predecessor colonies had paid to the tribes an average of 3.147 cents an acre for their purchased lands, which were later re-sold to whites for two dollars an acre.

The French and the Quakers provided the redeeming ex-

ceptions to the record of these European invaders. The French came to trade, not to possess the land. They sought the good will of the Indians, adopted their modes of life as their own, often made permanent marriages in the New World. And the French Jesuits came, saintly men and hardy men who proved to be discerning anthropologists and careful chroniclers as well. The Quakers, in Pennsylvania, cultivating peace in their own breasts, and seeking the experience of the Spirit, found the Indians wholly congenial in the early years.

Yet these brighter hues of the French and the Quakers were not to be enduring. "Imperial" interests overrode their pristine intentions. French and British rivalries, economic and political, were intense; each strove to unleash the Indians against the other; nearly all of the tribes found that they had no choice except to take sides. None who held power on either side—French or English—could withhold himself from the overriding polity; if not offensively, then defensively, they must hurl the Indians against their imperialist opponent, and this soon came to mean hurling Indian against Indian.

William Penn's successors played this kind of power politics along with the rest, only more successfully; and the reason for their success was a significant one. The reason was that their esteem and affection toward the Indians was genuine and active. The Indians responded in kind; and the Quakers honestly sought to fulfill their own part of every bargain. So, though they wanted peace, the Quakers, through binding to themselves and thus to England members of the Iroquois Confederacy, contributed decisively to the smashing of French power through the so-called French and Indian Wars.

This factor of power politics incalculably multiplied the Indian intertribal wars, and turned them into wars of extermination. Tribes were shunted pell-mell onto the hunting and planting grounds of other tribes. They had to stake all upon the victory of one or another of the European powers. They did stake their all again and again. They cast decisive weight into the European struggles for a continent. The victor always abandoned them after his use for them was over. Such is the approximate fact, yet with an exception—in the long run, a very important one. Because the tribes were indispensable pawns in her own imperial game, England forged out a policy toward the tribes, and that policy later became the basic Indian law of the United States.

The British Crown in 1754 took over from the Colonies the power of dealing with Indians, under this imperial policy: The

tribes were independent nations, under the protection of the Crown; Indian lands were inalienable except through voluntary surrender to the Crown; and any attempt by an individual or group, subject to the Crown, or by a foreign state, to buy or seize lands from Indians, was illegal.

Having framed this policy, the British Crown did more than give lip-service to it. Repeatedly, violations of the policy by one and another of the Colonies and by individual whites were rebuked and annulled. Hence, hatred of the Crown increased among the "Borderers," the whites at the westward verge of American settlement who were seizing the Indian lands. It could be argued, and may be true, that England lost the war of the American Revolution through trying to be faithful to this policy, which thereafter became the policy (often submerged, but ultimately triumphant) of the United States. At a far earlier date, Spain temporarily lost Peru, and all but finally lost it, through trying to be faithful to comparable policies.

So, through joining in the struggles for empire, though so much of his blood and all his lands were lost, the North American Indian achieved an affirmative recognition of himself and his societies. Far on in time, as we shall see, this recognition persisted. This recognition was to become applied policy, as it had long since become basic law, in the United States. The tragic ordeal of the Indian was perhaps not in vain; it may turn out to be an inspiration (as it has been in romantic literature) for all mankind.

CHAPTER 11

Iroquois and Cherokees

THE MOST important Indian grouping on the continent, north of Mexico, from the very beginning of European conquest on through and after the American Revolution was the Confederacy of the Iroquois. I think no institutional achievement of mankind exceeds it in either wisdom or intelligence—accepting the limits of its time and place. Our knowledge of this Confederacy is now, I think, complete—thanks to the lifelong studies of one of America's great ethnologists, the late J. N. B. Hewitt.¹

¹Fundamental work on the Confederacy's history and meaning was accomplished many years ago by Lewis H. Morgan; other important work was done by Arthur C. Parker.

The Confederacy came about sometime around the middle of the sixteenth century, or over fifty years after Columbus discovered America, but about fifty years or more before Jamestown and Plymouth Rock—to say nothing of New Amsterdam and Quebec.

Ostensibly, it was a league of five tribes (the Tuscaroras, driven from the south, joined in later to make the sixth)—Mohawk, Seneca, Oneida, Cayuga and Onondaga. The plan was to renounce warfare as between one another and to present an alliance against a warring world. For two centuries, or until the so-called French and Indian Wars, this Confederacy or League of United Five Nations was completely successful.

Viewed through the light of the full knowledge we now possess, the Confederacy was much more than a successful alliance for the purpose of keeping the peace among the most powerful of the North American tribes.

It sought universal, perpetual peace. It was Deganawida who was the motivating force. He was a man who lived not earlier than the sixteenth century; symbol and dream enveloped his memory, even as the memory of the Christ became enveloped. He was of virgin birth; his mother, Djigonsasee, "She of the Doubly New Face," guided and assisted him, and Hiawatha, a wizard who experienced a second birth through Deganawida's influence, was his speechmaker. Deganawida was a spiritual genius, uniquely endowed with *Orenda*, an inner power more strong than the natural powers of man. This *Orenda* knew how to reveal its truths through ceremonials, rituals, mystic parables.

Thus Deganawida (who suffered from an impediment of speech among a race of great orators) went with his intuitive vision fully wrought out, equated with every existing structure and value of the tribes, and cast into a logico-esthetic mold, to each of the five tribes who had so long warred with one another. Only the Onondagas remained unconvinced; the others made their union conditional on that of the Onondagas. Then Deganawida, the statesman, proposed that the Onondagas be made the Firekeepers in the proposed League Council—the chairmen, the moderators whose task was to find the way to happy unanimity. The Onondagas accepted, and the Confederacy was formed, to last in full vigor and harmony through more than two wildly storming centuries, and to last forever among the destiny-pointing ideas of mankind.

The code of the Confederacy read: "I, Deganawida, and the Confederated Chiefs, now uproot the tallest pine tree, and into

the cavity thereby made we cast all weapons of war. Into the depths of the earth, deep down into the under-earth currents of water flowing to unknown regions, we cast all weapons of strife. We bury them from sight and we plant again the tree. Thus shall the Great Peace be established."

The Confederacy was one of delegated, limited powers; and with exhaustive care and success, it was so structured that authority flowed upward, from the smallest and most organic units, not downward from the top. From this source came the stability of the Confederacy during the century and a half when all of the maddening stresses of white contact were focused upon it as upon no other Indian grouping; and hence, its far-seeing statesmanship, recognized by the Colonies, France and England. The Confederacy was a nation which enhanced the liberty and responsibility of its component parts down even to the minutest member.

"When the five Iroquoian tribes were organized into a confederation," wrote Hewitt, "its government was only a development of that of the separate tribes, just as the government of each of the constituent tribes was a development of that of the several clans of which it was composed. The government of the clan was a development of that of the several brood families of which it was composed, and the brood family, strictly speaking, was composed of the progeny of a woman and her female descendants, counting through the female line only . . . The simpler units surrendered part of their autonomy to the next higher units in such wise that the whole was closely interdependent and cohesive. *The establishment of the higher unit created new rights, privileges, and duties.*"² (My italics.) According to Hewitt the new rights, privileges and duties were created for the higher level as well as for all the lower levels which composed the higher; since power flowed always from the base to the summit, not the other way.

All power, but not all initiative and responsibility, thus flowed. Like nearly all Indians, the Iroquois knew that creativity and effective social action were matters of leadership. Developing and choosing leaders, and relating leaders to each other and to the people, was a preoccupation of nearly all tribes. It was only that the Iroquoian peoples possessed values and mechanisms which were in part their own; and in the Confederacy, these values and mechanisms were stated and institu-

²From *A Constitutional League of Peace in the Stone Age* by J. N. B. Hewitt, 1918. Smithsonian Institution.

tionalized close to perfection. To use exhaustively the leadership capacity of each component tribe; to conserve the rule of unanimity in legislative decisions; to make of this unanimity a creative, not merely a precautionary, principle; to utilize at the top levels, where the fate-making actions were thought out, and not only at the lowest level where all authority was reposed, the *womanhood* of the tribes; and to keep in intimate union the leadership at all levels, male and female leadership with the electorate from whom all power flowed (the mothers)—such was the aim and for generations the achievement.

The Five Nations came into the epoch of white contact as an institution perfected and whole. Its forty-nine "chiefs" were selected by the mothers of lines of descent which possessed hereditary chieftainship rights, subject to confirmation by popular vote (male and female) in each tribe and to subsequent confirmation by the whole body of chiefs. Women "Trustee Chieftainesses" similarly were chosen, and they were part of the confederated council. The mothers exercised the right of initiative, referendum and recall. To insure that those "uterine families" not possessed of hereditary chieftainship rights were not excluded from Confederacy leadership, the Council itself selected "Pine Tree Chiefs" on the basis of proved merit without regard to hereditary right; these were installed in the same way as the other chiefs. In addition, such families as did not hold hereditary chieftainship rights chose sister families as their representatives, and in effect joined with them in exercising the basic authorities.

Each tribe, through its chiefs, cast a unit vote in the Council. Four tribes—the Mohawk, Seneca, Oneida and Cayuga—voted; the fifth, the Onondaga, acted as moderator or chairman, called "Firekeeper." Each group of chiefs, in the order named above, discussed separately a given question. Unanimous decisions were simply confirmed by the Firekeeper; decisions not unanimous were discussed by the Firekeeper to the end of discovering common ground or some new solution, and then were remanded to the four voting units. This procedure made of legislative process a path to discovery, not to deadlock.

The peace aims of the Confederacy were universal. Through adoption by a "uterine family," any Indian on the continent could enter the confederation, and many did, voluntarily or through capture. The whole prospect was changed through settlement by the whites with their imperial contests only fifty years after the Confederacy had been perfected. The Dutch, the French, and the English solicited the Confederacy and threat-

ened it. They set the tribes at their rival's throats and at Indian throats along the whole frontier and a thousand miles inland. The Confederacy chose the Dutch alliance; the Dutch armed its member tribes with gunpowder weapons, and the Confederacy established hegemony over a half of all the territory east of the Mississippi.

That which had been completely intended as an enterprise toward universal peace became irresistibly re-directed into an enterprise of daring yet cautious diplomacy and of cohesive, swift efficiency in imperial warfare and Indian civil warfare. The alliance with the Dutch became the alliance with England, and sealed the fate of the French. The world events which Deganawida could not have foreknown ruled out the dream and the purpose.

"Policy," it is fashionable to remark among sociologists of these current years, "is only behavior." The action and the event—these alone have efficient reality; the idea and intention can be disregarded. The policy, then, of Deganawida, was rather resistless war than living peace, for so the future event constrained and so the action had to be. How strange, insular, this current sociological fashion, with its implied derogation of the Buddha, the Christ, and all the other sources of illimitable influence. An idea and an intention, among the Iroquois, wrought out a social institution, a system of greatness in human relationships, a system for evoking maximum genius and for socializing it, and a role of women in society, which well may stand today as the most brilliant creation in the record of man. Then from a world unknown, a ravenous race swept in a dark age for the native life which was hurled into the pit by cannon, by rum, by money, by unconscionable intrigue.

Deganawida would speak for most of the Indians since the white man came: Events and action are not the all; ideas, ideals and intentions are the master facts; they saturate events, and trans-substantiate their meanings; and they outlast.

More than any other tribe, the Cherokee Nation furnished the crystallizing thread of United States government policy and action in Indian affairs. The Cherokees were the largest of the Iroquoian tribes; but they never joined the Confederacy, and we never think of them as being Iroquois. In the years before Great Britain's power ended, the British Crown had intervened repeatedly to check the seizure of Cherokee lands by the "borderers." Thus it came about that in the war of the Revolution the Cherokees allied themselves with the British.

Not until 1794 did they stop fighting. The treaty which they then made with the United States was kept by them as a sacred thing.

The Cherokees met every test of peacefulness, of practicality, of Christian profession and conduct, of industry and productiveness, of out-going friendliness to the whites, of "progress" in domestic order and in education. They even offered little resistance to marriages between young men of the whites and their young girls. One of their great men, whom we know as Sequoia, and whom we have idealized, invented an alphabet considered second only to our European system in the various schemes of symbolic thought representation, and the tribe quickly became literate in our European sense. The Cherokees wrote a constitution of the American white man's kind. They established a legislature, a judiciary and an executive branch. A free press and public schools were set up. Again and again the tribe surrendered great areas of its treaty-held land. Over and over again, however hard pressed, it kept the faith.

Yet, in the years that followed, the treaty was breached both in the letter and in the spirit by the United States over and over again. And it is clear that nothing the Indians could have been or not been, could have done or not done, would have changed the white man's heart and will. The remnant of their lands included seven million acres, mostly mountain country in the region where Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee converge, what is now called the highland country. The Cherokees had to be removed even from these last fastnesses.

In 1828 Andrew Jackson was elected president. He was a "borderer" and had been a famous Indian fighter. Immediately he put through Congress an act called the Indian Removal Act which placed in his own hands the task of leading or driving all Indian tribes to some place west of the Mississippi River. At about the same time gold was discovered in the Cherokee country. The Georgia Legislature passed an act annexing—confiscating—all Cherokee lands within the state, declaring all laws of the Cherokee Nation to be null and void, and forbidding Indians to testify in any state court against white men. The Cherokee lands were distributed to whites through a lottery system.

In 1830, through John Ross, its chief, the tribe vainly appealed to President Jackson. Then it appealed to the Supreme Court. The Court refused to take jurisdiction; the tribe, it ruled, was not a foreign nation. "If it be true," said the Court, "that the Cherokee Nation has rights, this is not the tribunal in which these rights are to be asserted. If it be true that wrongs have

been inflicted, and that still greater are to be apprehended, this is not the tribunal which can redress the past or prevent the future."

The conscience of the Court was troubled by this Pilate-like decision. Two years later, it had an opportunity to reconsider. Three white missionaries refused to swear the oath of allegiance to Georgia while resident in the defined country of the Cherokee Nation. They were arrested, chained together, and forced to walk twenty-one miles behind a wagon to jail. Two Methodist preachers intervened against the brutality; they were chained with the others and thrown into jail with them. The missionaries were tried and sentenced to four years' hard labor in the state penitentiary. The case came up before the Supreme Court, and the Court, in effect reversing itself, ruled that Indian tribes or nations "had always been considered as distinct, independent, political communities, retaining their original natural rights . . . and the settled doctrine of the law of nations is, that a weaker power does not surrender its independence—its right to self-government—by associating with a stronger, and taking its protection.

"The Cherokee nation, then, is a distinct community, occupying its own territory, with boundaries accurately described, in which the laws of Georgia can have no force, and which the citizens of Georgia have no right to enter, but with the assent of the Cherokees themselves, or in conformity with treaties, and with the acts of Congress."

President Jackson retorted to the Court: "John Marshall (the Chief Justice) has rendered his decision; now let him enforce it."

So Georgia, and the whole of the Federal Government apart from the helpless Court, continued their policies toward the Cherokees. The whites could prospect for gold anywhere, the Indians not at all, though the land was their own. The President's commissioners harried some of the Cherokees into signing a treaty giving up the 7,000,000 acres still theirs for \$4,500,000 which would be deposited "to their credit" in the United States Treasury. The leaders and people had been immovable, but in an arranged meeting attended by some 400 of the tribe's 17,000 members, the fictional treaty was extorted. The Senate quickly ratified this "treaty."

Three years passed and the Cherokees were still upon their land. Then came General Winfield Scott with 7,000 troops and a non-military rabble of followers to invade the Cherokee domain. Cherokee men, women and children were seized wher-

ever found and without notice removed to concentration camps. Livestock, household goods, farm implements, everything went to the white camp-followers; the homes usually were burned. After this the long trek to Arkansas in mid-winter was begun. An eye-witness in Kentucky reported: "Even aged females, apparently nearly ready to drop into the grave, were travelling with heavy burdens attached to their backs, sometimes on frozen ground and sometimes on muddy streets, with no covering for their feet.

Of about 14,000 who were herded onto this "trail of tears," as it came to be called, 4,000 died on the way. While a hundred Cherokees a day were perishing of exhaustion and cold on that dreadful road, President Van Buren on December 3, 1838 addressed Congress: "The measures [for Cherokee removal] authorized by Congress at its last session have had the happiest effects . . . The Cherokees have emigrated without any apparent reluctance." The financial costs of the trail of tears were charged by the government against the funds credited to the tribe pursuant to the fraudulent treaty.

As the final company of the Cherokees started on the long trail, their leaders held the last council they would ever hold on their home ground. They adopted a resolution which ought to be remembered forever. They did not ask pity for their people, because they knew there would be no pity, and asking pity was never the Indian's way. They did not reproach or condemn Georgia or the United States Government. They did not quote John Marshall's decision, since that decision, for them, had been written on water. To the violated treaties and fraudulent treaties they made no reference; for they had now learned that which General Francis C. Walker was to phrase immortally when, in 1871, writing as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, he described the white man's view concerning honor toward Indians: "When dealing with savage men, as with savage beasts, no question of national honor can arise. Whether to fight, to run away, or to employ a ruse, is solely a question of expediency." Their treaties, the Cherokees had learned, had been "ruses" of the white man. So the resolution, passed in what then seemed to be their final hour, was addressed to no man, and leaned on no consideration, except the principle of justice which they believed was undying:

"The title of the Cherokee people to their lands is the most ancient, pure and absolute known to man; its date is beyond the reach of human record; its validity confirmed by possession and enjoyment antecedent to all pretense of claim by any portion of the human race.

"The free consent of the Cherokee people is indispensable to a valid transfer of the Cherokee title. The Cherokee people have neither by themselves nor their representatives given such consent. It follows that the original title and ownership of lands still rests in the Cherokee Nation, unimpaired and absolute. The Cherokee people have existed as a distinct national community for a period extending into antiquity beyond the dates and records and memory of man. These attributes have never been relinquished by the Cherokee people, and cannot be dissolved by the expulsion of the Nation from its territory by the power of the United States government."

That was all. Then these men of true greatness, through fraud and violence stripped of everything, set forth on the bitter trail to a place which was to be no lasting home.

To this point the Cherokee narrative, with changes only of detail, is the narrative of all the tribes east of the Mississippi from 1800 to 1840. All, within varied but always amply structured and consecutive societies, held anciently owned lands under treaty guarantees. Always, the treaties were nakedly violated by the United States, or changed or nullified through statute or proclamation, or whittled down or annulled through fraudulent deals by commissioners.

Like the Cherokees, the others of the "Five Civilized Tribes"—the Choctaws, Chickasaws, Creeks and Seminoles—were shoved into the area which became Indian Territory and is now Oklahoma. Through extreme tenacity, remnants of the Choctaws, Seminoles and Cherokees eluded or fought off the deportation. In a seven-years' war, from 1835 to 1842, the Seminoles in Florida held at bay armed forces thrice exceeding the number of their whole population in a war which cost the United States 1,500 lives and \$20,000,000, and in the end were left alone; they inhabit the Florida Everglades still. Their war chief, Osceola, when negotiating under a flag of truce in 1837, was kidnapped; imprisoned at Fort Moultrie, he was dead within a year; but the Seminoles never yielded. Of the Cherokees, a few hundred escaped and joined the wildcats and bears in the Great Smoky Mountains, where they were forgotten until, with the years, one by one they emerged to toil for the whites. Various they re-acquired 56,000 of their seized 7,000,000 acres, incorporated themselves under the North Carolina state law, and ultimately were brought under Federal jurisdiction again. The Choctaw remnant, landless share croppers in their homeland until a few years ago, are still in southern Mississippi, culturally Choctaws still.

In Indian Territory, now Oklahoma, the Five Civilized Tribes were planted on ample lands. The new treaties pledged them exclusive, everlasting possession of their *communally owned* domains; it pledged that their tribal governments would be left in authority forever. I resume the Cherokee narrative, which stands for the rest.

No longer were there rival European imperialisms, using the tribes against one another and therefore respecting the societal integrity of each allied tribe. There was only the United States: treaty-bound with the tribes, guardian over them, and through Supreme Court decisions vested in its legislative and executive branches with "plenary" authority over Indians.

Until 1849, the Bureau of Indian Affairs of the government was an office in the War Department. The Army, to its cost and frequent humiliation, had learned what it was that made the Indians cohesive, resistant and recuperative. It was their tribal societies. Hence the Army reached the decision to dispose of them. The decision was one of military and political convenience, and was acted upon rather than proclaimed, being in thorough conflict with the pledges contemporaneously written into each new treaty when the antecedent treaties had been voided, and in categorical conflict with the ideal, basic Indian law of the United States which the Supreme Court never tired of re-announcing.

Through the decades of Army rule over Indian affairs, the unproclaimed decision, "The tribal societies must die," was implemented through the divide-and-rule technique. Lines of cleavage were felt out within the given tribe; and the events of the Indian removal had insured that lines of cleavage would exist in every tribe. The cleavage among the Cherokees ran between their minority of "Old Settlers" on the one hand (the "Old Settlers" were those who had gone voluntarily to Indian Territory in advance of the enforced removal), along with the few hundred who had signed the fraudulent treaty of removal, and on the other hand the Cherokee National Party, headed by John Ross, the great chief of the tribe. The minority faction numbered 6,000, the Ross faction 12,000. Both factions desired to heal the tribal wound, to re-institute the tribe, harmonious and whole, for its promised everlasting self-rule in its promised everlasting new land. The Army, representing the United States, threw its whole pressure-power behind the minority, thus procuring for a decade a condition of smoldering civil war within the Cherokee Nation.

But the healing, building will of the Cherokees was too persevering, resourceful and strong; the divide-and-rule strategy

failed; the Five Civilized Tribes, every one, including the Cherokees, accomplished each its re-integration.

The control of Indian affairs was moved out of the War Department in 1849 and into the Interior Department. The choice, to subordinate Indians to the Interior Department rather than to create a new, civilian department wholly concerned with Indian matters, was a fateful choice; along with other factors, it insured for nearly all of the tribes a deeper doom than any that had gone before. For the Interior Department in those times was the agency of Congress in the "liquidation" of the American national estate—in the turning over to individuals, at the lowest possible price, public lands, including their timber and minerals, which was to say most of the lands west of the Mississippi. The Interior Department assimilated the Indians, their lands, societies, communities, families, personalities and very souls, into its "liquidation" preoccupation and technique. It transformed the Army's unproclaimed policy and strategy of tribal dissolution from an unformalized, somewhat episodic practice to a proclaimed policy, even into a kind of religious, fanatical profession. Elaborately implemented, followed through amid financial corruption with compulsive ruthlessness, the Interior Department prosecuted "Indian liquidation" right on into the dawn of the 1930's.

During the American Civil War, a majority of the members of the Five Civilized Tribes joined the Confederate side. When the war ended, every Southern state was permitted by the victorious Union to keep its every prerogative; but because some of the Five Tribes had aided the Confederacy, Congress in one stroke canceled every treaty under which the Five Tribes lived. Then new treaties were negotiated; they required the surrender by the Five Tribes of all their lands in western Indian Territory. Nearly two score of other Indian tribes from the woodlands areas and the plains were driven from their homelands and put down on some of this land extorted from the Five Tribes. The rest was "thrown open" to white settlers.

Still intact in eastern Oklahoma, within boundaries still containing nearly 20,000,000 acres, the Five Tribes and their governments remained. How, by methods not entailing new Indian wars, and within forms of law, could their residual lands be taken and their governments and societies wiped from the book of life? Many annual reports of Commissioners of Indian Affairs and Secretaries of the Interior, and many debates in Congress, revolved about this question. Indian wars had become unpopular. Between 1862 and 1867, wars with the Sioux,

Cheyenne and Navajo alone had cost the United States Government \$100,000,000. The Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1868 officially estimated that the cost per Indian killed was running at \$1,000,000. Yet the Indian lands must be taken away, the Indian societies must be destroyed. How? The question applied to all Indian tribes, and the Five Civilized Tribes among them. A number of converging methods were adopted, and the Cherokee record shows one of them in action. It was the most universal and fatal of all the methods.

Tribal society and the communally possessed land were two aspects of a single fact. The earth lived; individuals of the tribe were members of one another and part of the earth. Individuals had no wish to own some one, detached piece of the land; they were co-owners of it all. But they were not even co-owners; they were co-operators with the land, defenders of it, at once its guardians and its children. "What," the famous Tecumseh had exclaimed, "Sell land! As well sell air and water. The Great Spirit gave them in common to all."

This, therefore, was the solution of the problem which vexed the statesmen: Each individual Cherokee should be forced to accept as his own one little piece of the tribal land. He should have no right, title or interest in any other piece. When each Cherokee had been forced to accept the decreed parcel of land, all land left over should be declared "surplus" and sold by the government to whites. The tribal society's interest in the individualized land should be terminated as a matter of law and of administration. With individualization of the land, guardianship of it should pass from the tribe to the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Such was the "land allotment" system. By the time it had become fully formulated as a project (the early 1880's), all ethical scruples had been disposed of. The tribal societies were barriers against civilization, spiritual prisons of their members, insuring hell-fire for most of them after death. The de-tribalized Indian on his individual parcel of land would become thrifty, a go-getter; and if he did not, then it would be right to have created the situation wherein his sins would overwhelm him. The most eminent of the rationalizers of Indian allotment, and of forced individualization generally, was Carl Schurz when he was Secretary of the Interior in the early 1880's.

The Cherokees knew all that was intended by land allotment, and all that it would accomplish. Like the other tribes, they resisted it to the end. Once more they laid their case before the Supreme Court. The pending land allotment, they pleaded, was

violative of their treaty guarantee "that the lands now occupied by the Cherokee Nation shall be secured to the whole Cherokee people for their common use and benefit." It was expropriative and confiscatory. It was a means of killing their society and government, which had received in successive treaties the guarantee of perpetual existence and self-rule. Their individual members did not want to receive title to a parcel of land and have their title to all the land annulled. They would be utterly ruined if allotment were carried through. From its Olympian remoteness, the Court rejected the plea. Allotment was within the authority of Congress and the Executive; it was they, not the Court, who must decide how to exercise guardianship; bad intentions were not to be presumed by the Court. Sixteen million acres were allotted to the members of the Five Tribes; 4,346,000 to the Cherokees. In about twenty years, all except 1,500,000 acres had passed to whites; the Cherokees had 400,000 acres left.

As the Five Tribes' lands melted away, whites crowded in; the tribes became a minority in their own land. Did their governments have to perish? The answer of present years is no. They would have had to change; but priceless structures, serving the needs of mutual aid, of personality development, of social continuity, of the conservation of status, and of productivity on many lines, could have outlived the deep wound of land allotment.

But the United States was determined that no native social structure should live. By successive acts of Congress, the Five Tribes were shorn of their governmental function; their courts were abolished; their tribal taxes were abolished; the sale of their public lands and buildings was ordered; their legislatures were forbidden to remain in session more than thirty days in any one year. The public funds of the tribes were impounded into the United States Treasury. By the date of the "final act" of 1906, passed by Congress as a gesture of respect toward a few uncrumbled walls, the house of government of the Five Tribes had been demolished utterly. There still remained the Federal guardianship over the residual individualized properties, the pledged immunity from taxation (pledged in exchange for the surrender of vast areas of land), and the federally supplied social services. Under Oklahoma political pressure, these national commitments were diminished or abandoned one by one. The local looting of Indians became a principal business in eastern Oklahoma, continuing with brazen openness until past 1925, and not wholly ended even yet.

Meanwhile the Cherokees who remained in the East returned one by one from the wilds, years after the Removal, and acquired lands amounting to one per cent of the domain that had been taken from them. They virtually owned these lands individually but placed the title in a tribal corporation. Just a month before the time of this writing, I revisited the Eastern Cherokees. I have not encountered such poised, quiet, merry children, such old people of sage and witty happiness, since I revisited the Pueblos, two years ago.

Seventeen per cent of the total population of the Eastern Cherokees had gone into the armed forces in World War II. They fought on every front, and the battle deaths were high. Returning, the G. I. boys and men had flung themselves into the problems of their homeland. A thrilling work of balanced land-use and conservation, with the healing of erosion-wounded lands, was going ahead. The tribe had planned its long future, and on several lines was advancing into it.

CHAPTER 12

California and Plains Indians

THE INDIANS of California were under Spanish domination from 1769 until 1845, when California became part of the United States. When the Spaniards came, there were about 200,000 Indians in the area, speaking twenty-one languages in many dialects. They were a hunting and fishing people, not warriors. Tribal boundaries were severely respected. They existed within hundreds of distinct societies whose adaptations, motivations, structures and views of nature and man were ample for their needs. Sir Francis Drake's classic description of the coast tribes around the present San Francisco might be applied to them all: Arcadian people, he found them, whose natures

could hardly be told save through the language of music; peoples joyously hospitable who seemed as free as birds, whose speech and colors were like the warbling and plumage of birds.

When the Franciscans came to California, their Missions brought together some 25,000 of these Indians who were then taught agriculture and crafts. But within the Missions they lost their old religions and traditions and tribal ways. Mortality was always high among these Indians during the sixty-five years the Missions endured; but swift death overtook them after the Missions ended in 1834. Most of the tribes that were wholly devoted to Mission life have long since become extinct.

Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo had explored the Southern California coast three hundred years before, and had found a dense population. Childlike they were, these natives, but athletic, precise, completely efficient toward their practical ends, within their unending dance and song. For how many thousand years had this man-nature garden of all bright colors grown? More than ten thousand years.

A military post was established at Santa Barbara in 1782, and a Mission four years later. The Indians usually entered the Mission by choice, but they were held there through force; the military insisted on forcible confinement because the Indians, who quickly learned to farm, fed the garrison.

In the first years the Indians lived in huts in the open. Later they were confined within a walled space, locked from nine in the evening until morning prayers. "Every six months men and boys received a pair of breeches, and every seven months a shirt," David Banks Rogers says. "The women and girls were allotted a chemise and shirt each, every seven months. With this wardrobe the hitherto naked savages were required to keep themselves modestly arrayed under pain of severe penalties for any lapse." The penalties took the form of the stocks, the shackles or the lash.

How galling physical punishment must have been to them, we may realize when we read in the early chronicles that there seemed to be no form of chastisement whatsoever in use among the natives before the coming of the white man. We know from the sources that at Santa Barbara Mission the women were punished by sentence of from one to three days in the stocks. If they proved obstinate or ran away, they were lashed in the woman's apartment by the hands of another woman. With the men, it often went much harder.

Death walked the Mission compound. After thirteen years there were eight hundred and sixty-four living Indians and six

hundred and sixty-two deaths had occurred. The Indians, according to Rogers, "knew the fatal tendency of their new environment."

Many causes for the awful failure of the California Missions have been assigned, but the significant cause for all time to come is plain. It was the total, instantaneous suppression of the native societies, the willed destruction of those marvelous ecological complexes within which native life had gushed and bloomed in its millenniums. Verily, in this case, the thing which Las Casas did not know, which the Franciscans did not learn, which governments are only starting to learn now, contained the doom of the Indians.

In 1845 California became part of the United States, and four years later came the gold rush, bringing with it a diseased, local exaggeration of the national feeling toward foreigners, a hearty contempt for people and institutions that were different. This racial scorn and the greed fostered by the gold fever seared the Indians into charred remnants of people. The 110,000 to 130,000 California Indians of 1850 were fewer than 20,000 by 1880.

Disease was a factor; wanton murder which the white community did not view as murder at all; enslavement. But the principal cause was a more subtle and more dreadful thing, as C. Hart Merriam, a profound student of the California Indians, has pointed out; it was the gradual but relentless confiscation of their lands and homes, forcing them to seek refuge in remote and barren localities where health, even life itself frequently, could not be sustained. There was a cause more subtle and dreadful yet—a psychological depression resulting in the will to die, for their societies were slain.

Beginning in 1851, the United States negotiated treaties with 119 of the tribes. The Indians surrendered more than half of California (treaties were not negotiated with tribes occupying about one-half of the State) and accepted, in return, perpetual ownership of 7,500,000 acres. Through California pressure, the Senate in Washington denied confirmation to the treaties; the treaties and the record of the Senate's action were placed in the Senate's files, there to repose until 1905; the Indian Bureau, administrative guardian of the tribes, never breathed to the Indians what had transpired; the Indians remembered the treaties; they knew them by heart; they fulfilled their part of the supposed agreements only to witness the sale to whites, by the government, of every acre of the 7,500,000 pledged to them.

It was among the Plains Indians that the policy of annihila-

tion of the societies and then of the individual Indian personality was carried to the farthest extreme.

Most of the Plains region came to the United States through the treaty of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. Contact between the government and most of the Plains tribes dated from the close of the American Civil War. Beginning about 1870, a leading aim of the United States was to destroy the Plains Indians' societies through destroying their religions; and it may be that the world has never witnessed a religious persecution so implacable and so variously implemented. The successive and evolving reactions of the Indians to the irresistible proscription supplied a moving chapter to the religious history of mankind.

The assault against the tribal and intertribal religions was part of an all-out offensive against Indian land and society. The offensive, including its religious part, reached far beyond the Plains region, but nowhere else was it so intense. The main features of what may be called the secular part of the onset can be briefly indicated.

First, there was military assault, on slight pretexts or no pretexts at all, and the government exploited tribal rivalries in order that Indians should kill Indians. The limited and disciplinary war-customs of the Plains turned into total warfare, aimed at annihilation, with the United States Army as the driving power. The tribes were finally beaten, however, not through overwhelming numbers or superior armament (though these existed) but through starvation after the whites had destroyed the buffalo.

Treaties and agreements were made, and in a few years unilaterally broken by the United States. Here, as almost universally with Indian compacts, the record of the Five Civilized Tribes was duplicated.

The buffalo was destroyed. That revelry of slaughter, which had no sportsmanship in it, was recognized as a war measure against the Indians and was deliberately encouraged.

Thereafter, the tribes were imprisoned (it was technically and factually an imprisonment) in separate, diminished reservations, where they had no choice but to live by government rations. Treaty and statute had made the even-handed distribution of these rations obligatory; but in practice, and openly, as a matter of rule, the distribution was used to starve the Indians who would not forswear their religion and their tribal customs and loyalties. In addition, all authority was taken away from the tribal leaders who refused to serve as puppets under the Army and the Indian Bureau.

To kill the Indian traditions and to break the relationship of

the generations, Indian children were seized at six years and were confined in "boarding schools" until past their adolescence. In vacation time they were indentured to whites as servants. In the schools the use of the native languages was forbidden; everything reminiscent of or relevant to Indian life was excluded; the children were forced to join whichever Christian church, through the favor of the Indian Bureau, had entrenched itself in the particular school.

Finally, forced land allotment operated among the Plains tribes as among all Indians, except for a few tribes in and outside of Arizona and New Mexico. It physically disrupted the extended family by attaching each household, even each individual, to a segregated parcel of land. The non-agricultural Plains tribes were furnished neither the training, the agricultural credit nor the capital goods requisite for a shift-over to farming. Perforce, as soon as restrictions against sale were lifted, the Indians sold their parcels to whites. Where they did not sell, the allotment in question was split into heirship equities with all collateral heirs included. There soon were a hundred heirs to a single allotment, and a given Indian found himself part-owner, with equities of a few dollars or a few cents, of twenty or fifty scattered parcels. No recourse remained except to sell the heirship lands or lease them in blocks to white cattlemen.

The Indians of the whole country lost 90,000,000 acres to whites through the direct and indirect workings of land allotment in the years from 1887 to 1933; but in addition, they lost to whites the *use* of most of the allotted land still Indian-owned.

All of these processes went forward within a governmental service dominated by political patronage and saturated with corruption. This single fact about the government's Indian record is so well known that it is here mentioned for one reason only. The friends of the Indian attributed his mounting ruin to corrupt, bad men. Across nearly fifty years, exposures, campaigns and drives within and without the government were focused toward getting a personally honest, in place of a personally dishonest, Indian Bureau. The policies and the system itself were not questioned except in terms of the personal morality of Indian commissioners and Indian agents.

Then, as early as 1905, by virtue of civil service and of elaborate fiscal controls, financial corruption became less important in the government Indian service. Outside the Five Civilized Tribes and Osage areas of Oklahoma, in the rest of the Indian country and in the administration at Washington, personal probity be-

came the rule, not the exception. But the mounting ruin of Indians went on and accelerated with each passing year.

The purification of Indian administration had indeed its consequence. Given the policy, the system, the philosophy and the law of Indian affairs, it actually speeded the destruction of the Indians. A secondary consequence was important: The disappearance of personal scandal from administration compelled the Indians and their friends in public and private life to seek other causes for their distress. They found these causes in the policy, system, philosophy and law of Indian affairs, and they converged their efforts toward changing these impersonal facts. Short of that fundamental change, they realized, no reform could make any lasting difference at all. I myself participated across eleven years in the struggle for fundamental change; only one time, and in relation to one individual within the Interior Department, did I have occasion to charge or to suspect a corrupt financial motive.

It was not individual corruption but collective corruption; corruption which did not know it was corrupt, and which reached deep into the intelligence of a nation. It was such a collective corruption that dominated the Plains Indian record and nearly the whole Indian record of the United States. Collective corruption is more effectually carried into deed through agents not personally corrupt.

The onslaught against the religion of the Indians took the form of regulations against religious practices and ceremonies. The master-expression of Plains Indian religion was the Sun Dance. And to forbid the Sun Dance was to forbid tribal existence and to cut the tap-root of Plains Indian personality.

Viewed socially, the Sun Dance was the integrative and structuring institution of the Plains tribes. Viewed psychologically, it was the culminating discipline, forthgiving and sharing, which structured the personality of the young, renewed the personality of the old, opened the mind's windows to a noble world-view, and drew in power and joy from the tribe and from the universe to the individual breast. Viewed creedally, it asserted verbally, but far more richly symbolized and implied, the union of men in God.

The Sun Dance appears as an invention—an exquisitely perfect one—at the social level. With the acquisition of the horse, the life of the Plains tribes—Cheyenne, Arapaho, Sioux (Dakota), Crow, Blackfeet, Kiowa and others—became profoundly modified. No longer could the sub-groups composing a

tribe stay in continuous physical contact with one another. The little sub-groups, with all their possessions, men, women and children journeying together, and with large herds of horses, needs must scatter over vast areas in pursuit of the buffalo. Yet the significant and valued flow of life was tribal. The Sun Dance was the invention which met this dilemma.

In the summer, at breeding season, the buffalo gathered in large herds; and in the summer, the grasses were lush, so that the concentration of the thousands of horses was possible. Therefore, at that time the scattered sub-groups all drew together; and the Sun Dance was the celebration. The whole tribe camped in one immense circle; the circle of tepees symbolized tribal unity. A priest, or director, possessor of a "sacred bundle," and imbued with knowledge of all ceremonies and meanings, assumed the religious and in some cases the political control of the encampment.

Near the encampment's center a sacred tepee was pitched; there, the rites preliminary to the main ritual were carried out. Those being initiated received their instruction, and there was smoking, feasting, praying, and the shaping of the objects to be used in the great ceremony. Meantime, the women held their own joyous and sacred gathering; and a virgin of exceptional character was selected by the priest or director to fell the tree which should serve as the Sun Dance pole.

The Sun Dance lasted four days and nights, within an immense brush lodge circular in form. Ritualized ordeals were undergone in the dance, and no participant ate or drank for the four days and nights. "The Ceremony was rich in symbolism," Donald Collier writes. "Besides the sun, other powers of the earth and sky, the thunder, the stars, mother earth, and the four cardinal directions, were represented in song, dance and painting, and the symbolism of war and the buffalo were prominent throughout."

There were numerous minor ceremonies, mock battles between the soldiers' societies of the different kinship groupings, and ceremonial hunts. Every age-level participated, every operation cut across all of the sub-groupings, and every homely practice of every day was brought into relation with the core-values and the cosmic yearning of the tribe.

Donald Collier writes further: "All of these things combined during the brief Sun Dance period to give an intense and joyful feeling of tribal unity. This tribal unification was the more effective because it stemmed from a period into which was crowded so much happy activity. At the end of this period the

tribal organization ceased to exist, and the people moved off to their encampments. But as they resumed their usual activities, they felt strongly the fullness of life, and the greatness and unity of the tribe." Between Sun Dances, the tribe actually did cease to exist, except within the soul; it existed there as the road into the universe, a two-way road.

First, in the Sioux country, the Army crushed the Sun Dance with armed force. Then the missionaries influenced the Bureau of Indian Affairs to impose regulations against not only the Sun Dance but all "pagan" ceremonies which, they believed, impeded the progress of the Indians toward Christian civilization. The Interior Department framed a criminal code forbidding Indian religious practices and establishing penalties. Enacted in 1884 and enriched in 1904, this code stood in force and effect until 1933.

Of course, this code of Indian religious crimes could not be enforced everywhere. To crack down the Navajo "sings" in remote deserts, the Pueblo vigils and the rituals in the inviolable kivas, and Seminole rituals in the deep Everglades, the solitary keepers of visions on the Mojave desert, was a task beyond the government's resources. Not until the middle 1920's, as we shall later see, was the universal suppression of Indian religions, through the direct use of force, projected by the Indian Bureau. Prior to that date, outside the Plains area, the main means of persecution was not to shoot or jail adult worshipers but to immolate the Indian children in boarding schools and there compel them to join Christian churches.

But among the Plains tribes, the very nature of the Sun Dance, and of successor religions to the Sun Dance, made forcible suppression easy. The Sun Dance was a merging of every individual with the annually resurrected tribe in a social-cosmic worship. Merely to forbid the tribe to meet together at all was to kill the Sun Dance. That was done to the Sioux, and the military enforced the prohibition. With the buffalo gone, merely to withhold rations from those who insisted on meeting together was to confront them with actual death from starvation; and that was done. Failing these methods, the outright massacre of Indian communicants was practicable, for the Indians were now disarmed in the face of the white soldiery. The famous battle of Wounded Knee in 1890 was an outright massacre.

The Sun Dance was destroyed forever.

But the life of the Spirit, taking the various forms of what we call the religions of the world, and accompanied by ritual and ceremony, often by dance and song despite the Puritans,

often by a severe asceticism despite the rotund bishops of so many persuasions, often by sackcloth and ashes in renunciation of this earthly life, is difficult to suppress. Among these Plains Indians and the Indians marginal to the Plains—those who could not en masse become good Christians by order—new religious cults evolved.

In Oregon there came into being the society of "The Dreamers," whose principal sentiment was an impassioned affirmation of the union between man and his mother earth. The Dreamers' religion appears in our white history through the figure of Chief Joseph of the Nez Percé tribe. Its religion was one of nonresistance to evil. "The earth is part of my body and I never gave up the earth," said Tochulhulsote, one of the chief priests and spokesmen. "I have only one heart," said an Umatilla chief. "Although you say: Go to another country, my heart is not that way. I am here, and here is where I am going to be. I will not part with my lands, and if you come again I will say the same thing. I will not part with my lands."

In 1877, General Howard of the United States Army, as a step toward dispossessing the Nez Percé band, threw Tochulhulsote, the principal Dreamer priest of Joseph's Nez Percé band, into jail. The Dreamers had no choice but to yield, and Joseph selected for the temporary confinement of the band a place in the Lapwai Valley of Idaho. While the Nez Percés were gathering their stock for removal, a band of whites attacked them, ran off the cattle and killed one of the Indians in charge. Then desperation broke through all the religious restraint; the Nez Percés went to war. With his hundred warriors Chief Joseph in three weeks killed 58 white soldiers and their general, Howard, in a series of running fights. Impeded by more than 350 women and children, Joseph undertook to cut through three white armies which surrounded him and win his way to Canada.

Again, again and again, Joseph encountered detachments of the Army and cut them down or drove them off. At last, after a journey of more than a thousand miles, with his warriors reduced to fifty and starved and exhausted but still carrying their wounded and the women and children, within fifty miles of the Canadian line, he was intercepted by General Miles with fresh forces. He fought on until forty of his fifty warriors were wounded, the others killed. Then he surrendered upon the express pledge that with his survivors "he would be taken to Tongue River (Montana) and be kept there until spring, and then would be returned to Idaho." General Sheridan, into whose hands Joseph passed, violated the pledge which General Miles

had given, and the surviving Nez Percés were sent to Indian Territory, where disease and hunger reduced the entire band from 450 to 280 in seven years.

So perished the religion of The Dreamers.

Beside Puget Sound in the State of Washington there arose a curious cult, among the Squaxins, somewhat resembling our early Shakers. They considered the church which they founded under their leader, Squ-sacht-un, known as John Slocum, as a Christian church, embodying all that was best in the Catholic, Calvinistic and Red Indian traditions. As with the Shakers, one of their first tenets was absolute non-violence. "Banishment, chains and imprisonment" were their lot.

The Ghost Dance religion was overwhelmed by the horrible massacre at Wounded Knee. Its prophet was a full-blood Paiute Indian, Wovoka, born about 1856, the son of an earlier Paiute prophet. Wovoka spoke no Indian tongue except Paiute, did not know the sign language, and never had been out of Nevada. But delegations from all over the Plains came to him. He knew some English, and worked for a white rancher.

On January 1, 1889, in the course of a severe illness, and on the day of a total eclipse of the sun, Wovoka entered into a trance. He seemed to be dead, and then he was reborn. His soul had been taken into the heavens, and there he saw God, "with all the people who had died long ago engaged in their oldtime sports and occupations, all happy and forever young." God told him that his own time was not yet; he must go back to earth and tell the Indians that they must be good and love one another; they must live at peace with the whites, and work, and put away all war. God did not promise that the Indians would come again into their own on earth; but in heaven they would come into their own.

Just what it was that drew them to Wovoka, who spoke none of their languages, living far off under the snowcapped Sierras bounding Nevada, is nowhere made clear. But they came as disciples, and their desperate troubles of the soul acted upon him. His prophecy changed. Not only in heaven, but on earth the millennium was to come, and it was to come soon. It was to come with earthquake when the risen dead, already arrived at the boundaries of earth, led forward by the Regenerator who would appear vast as a cloud and vague as a cloud, should suddenly be among men. Then the aged, weary earth, whose bonds with its people had been cut by the white man, would die. The races would die. The white man, if reborn, would be reborn into some other world. The Indians would be reborn into this world and

land, their own, and heaven and earth would be confluent as of old.

Pacifism remained the soul and body of the doctrine. Be quiet yet a little while, Indians, all Indians; war is forever done, for you; the overruling spiritual power needs no help from you, except love and quiet in your souls. The end is near, is near . . .

Thus, like a great south wind, a boundless hope blew across the Plains.

But the white man was not idle. Out of his guilt, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, he passed the word along: A new religion of war is sweeping the warlike tribes of the Plains; Indian uprisings are at hand. The eastern newspapers contained stories of the rumors, along with fictions of uprisings and massacres. The army reinforced its posts in Indian country. The end came swiftly; at Wounded Knee, on December 29, 1890, 98 disarmed warriors and 200 women and children were massacred. A religion of redemption, of active peace and of love, went down in blood.¹

Yet, in spite of innumerable such destructions of mystical-social institutions, profound and strange, Indian religion lived on. Today it has been re-institutionalized, into an expanding, intertribal spiritual development known as the Native American Church. Incorporated some twenty-five years ago, the "cult" of the Native American Church dates from about 1870 among Indians in the United States. Its communicants number perhaps 25,000. In its ceremony, peyote, a cactus product, believed holy and miraculous, is eaten. Both Pre-Columbian and Christian elements are merged in its creed, ethical code and ceremonies. The synthesis is a creative one. Communion of souls one with another and with the Godhead, and charity and continence, are its controlling aims and tenets. Peyote, ceremonially used, brings a sense that barriers are melted away and that the human flows into the Godhead. Also it acts upon the centers of vision of the brain and produces or releases into consciousness illusions of beautiful colors and forms. Havelock Ellis characterized it as "the most intellectual of the drugs." Some four hundred books and technical papers, in many languages, are devoted to the "cult" and to peyote as a physiologically reactive substance. The extensive research finds peyote to be "not habit-forming or deleterious."

Alfred Wilson, Cheyenne Indian of Oklahoma, was head of the Native American Church, and until the day he died at sixty-

¹*The Ghost Dance Religion* by James Mooney. 1892-93. Bureau of American Ethnology.

eight, he worked for the Church. When death came in February, 1945, he was in Washington on behalf of his congregation, seeking to persuade white men to repeal those state and federal laws which implement the persecution of the Native American Church.

Alfred Wilson was representative of much that is Indian and also more than Indian. When he said, "We will all go to prison, and stay there, or suffer anything, but we will not go away from our religion"; when he confronted the drive to exterminate by physical means an Indian religion, a drive carried out by white men and other Indians—by those who themselves had experienced persecution; when he renewed the offer of his congregation, made in previous years, to submit itself and its members to unlimited scientific investigation, biological, psychological, anthropological, because he had faith in science as well as in his religion; and when he did all these things in a spirit of disinterested love, then he represented a universal wisdom—while at the same time an Indian cause and an Indian wisdom.

His belief came from deep religious experience which was also philosophical realization at the same time. It made him love all sensate life and rejoice in it all. D'Arcy McNickle, a Flathead Indian, wrote of Alfred Wilson, after a talk with him.

"Alfred talked at length about the meaning of peyote and about the whole field of religious experience. The remarks which I here put down as a continuous statement, actually were very scattered, but they are carefully accurate.

"The Indian, he said, stresses the importance of 'I am.' By this he meant that the individual is a manifestation of the breath or energy of God. He is earth, but the earth part is only that which makes him visible; the part which is his real life, which makes the 'I am,' is that which we call the breath of God. Man, because he partakes of this spiritual essence, has a mind reaching beyond the conscious mind. It is that which flows into him from the deity and which is his to use during his lifetime. This mind, going beyond the conscious mind, is an active, thinking reality, and this active, thinking reality also makes or influences the conscious mind. When a man is sick and his brothers meet with him and hold a peyote ceremony, they are lending for his use their immaterial minds. The cure which they try to bring about is an insertion of the immaterial mind in the body and into the tangible, and it is achieved through reinforcing the sick man's unconscious, immaterial mind with their own.

"Peyote itself is a part of that immaterial mind—a part of the breath or spirit.

"Indians do not speak of the beginning as Christians do. They know nothing of the beginning, nor will they say that there is to be an ending. It is here. Nor will Indians say that there is a hell. They cannot conceive of such a thing. They say this: That men must follow the right path of living. They must live according to the laws of nature, which are moral laws. If they fail to do that, they hurt themselves and that is all the punishment there is. They point to the Milky Way, which is a path across heaven, but which has a branch leading off into emptiness. If man fails to live according to the laws of nature, he goes off on that side branch which ends in emptiness."

This faith and knowledge in Alfred Wilson enabled him to be quietly happy within whatever discouragements, infirmities and defeats, and to live and strive as the head of a persecuted religious group without the need to judge his persecutors. It enabled him to be as wise as he was charitable, and out of inner security to have no need for self-justification in his own eyes or anyone's eyes. Being thus wise, and inwardly secure and without the need for compensations, Alfred Wilson knew that the law of life and its way is action and service.

That "integrative" study which members of the cult first invited in 1924 and which Alfred Wilson again invited, still waits to be carried out. A rich opportunity for discovery waits. Meantime, white and Indian Christian missionaries, and some Indian tribes of Pre-Columbian orthodoxy, go ahead with their assault upon the Native American Church; and oblivious to the Bill of Rights and to the older, sacred value of liberty of conscience, they have lobbied the legislatures and have obtained penal statutes with which to scourge the Native American Church.

Alfred Wilson lived and died in the effort, not yet successful, to establish for his own congregation the most fundamental of American liberties, freedom of religion. He knew that persecution strengthened his congregation. But he strove also as an American, and as a man of universal qualities, and as an agent of civilization.

CHAPTER 13

The Final Struggle Commences and Prevails

BY THE year 1892, the Indian wars had ceased. The apocalyptic religions had been killed. The impersonal systems of Indian expropriation were fully under way--including land allotment and sale of the allotments; throwing open on bargain counters the unallotted residuum, so-called "surplus lands"; leasing, for short terms, allotted farm and grazing lands, under profligate conditions. Indian-built and Indian-maintained irrigation systems serving subsistence farming were destroyed, and irrigation systems built at great cost (the cost had exceeded \$50,000,000 by 1924) and destined for the commercial use of outsiders were substituted. Indian-owned timber was clean-cut. (In 1917, the Assistant Indian Commissioner explained to the Indian Committee of the House that since the Indians were being liquidated it was policy to liquidate their forests at the same time, even though these forests were the protecting cover of watersheds.) Indian tribal funds (in an amount totaling more than \$100,000,000 between 1900 and 1930) were diverted to meet the costs of the Indian Bureau. The Court of Claims, pursuant to Congressional direction, "offset" all past government expenditures nominally meant to benefit the Indians, including the costs of despoiling them, against awards which they might win through suits against the government. And in Oklahoma, individualized Indian estates were looted through a system of local white "guardians" named by the Oklahoma courts pursuant to Congressional grants of power. (To 2,000 Osages, Plains Indians with no experience in money economy, and battered upon by the white population, in sixteen years following 1915 there was paid out in cash, by the government, \$265,000,000 in royalties from Osage oil. Ninety per cent of this total went "down the wind" of ruined Osages and corrupted and corrupting whites.

On the whole, these interlocking, impersonal despoliations moved toward their end silently. Outside of eastern Oklahoma, lurid scandal was rarely involved; and as I have explained, per-

sonal financial corruption within the Indian Bureau had become the exception, not the rule. The individual Indian, who in all but a very few cases was denied by law the right to organize corporately or politically, was helpless against the silent storm. The white missionaries and denominations were silenced; nay, they were made ancillary to the impersonal despoliation. They worked among the tribes by the grace of the Indian Bureau; the largest group of them was heavily subsidized by the Bureau from Indian-owned funds. The enforced proselytizing of Indian children in the schools derived its authority from the Bureau. Anthropologists conducted studies among nearly every Indian group; but they, like other investigators, journalists or "agitators," proceeded under Indian Bureau license (factually when not technically), and were subject to forcible ejection from Indian country without reason assigned. Various espionage statutes, not successfully defied until 1922 and not repealed until 1933, when combined with the other conditions, blanketed the Indians and Indian country in the silence of a living tomb.

Yet outside the Indian Bureau, unattended by it or by great pressure groups or committees of Congress, a change in the climate of opinion was dawning. Individuals influenced this change. The government was running its Indian schooling "to break up the Pueblos," but President Theodore Roosevelt visited the Hopi peoples and extolled their way of life, "as precious as anything existing in the United States." He spoke for the conservation of resources, particularly of forest resources, though his words and actions did not reach to the Indian forests. Natalie Curtis, Mary Austin, Ernest Thompson-Seton, and a score of others of distinction spoke out. The surviving and, in a few tribes, newly exfoliating, ancient arts and crafts, were discovered by museums and schools. Then came World War I. The Indians, not then citizens, and exempt from the draft, volunteered by thousands, and made a record that was generally acclaimed.

Other changes in the climate of opinion were taking place, which had a latent relationship with the Indian in the United States. Mexico's revolution swept through bloody changes to its end, and projected a bold, far-reaching Indian program. North Americans became aware of the millions of Indians south of the Rio Grande. Movements of folk dance, folk art, folk drama, folk craft arose among our own people. The geographical frontier was done; it had been pushed to the Pacific Ocean; thus the Indian in the white mind was freed from his symbolic stigma as the opponent of the expanding frontier; he need be viewed as the enemy no longer.

No knowledge of these changes in the climate of opinion reached the Indians; and the Indian Bureau, imprisoned within its own system of dogma and device, did not suspect that these changes were taking place. Commencing in 1917, an increased frenzy of "liquidation" seized the Bureau. Swift as were the legalized devices of expropriation, they were not swift enough; the Bureau rushed beyond the law, and forced upon Indians throughout the allotted country the acceptance of fee-patents to their lands. This drew the land onto the local tax rolls and allowed its immediate sale to whites. The yearly supply bills of Congress for a quarter century thereafter carried appropriations to pay damages for this lawless policy. The Plains tribes had been building themselves into the cattle industry. The Bureau persuaded and where necessary coerced them to sell their breeding stock; and then (in World War I years and thereafter) it pressured all the lands into white leaseholds. It leased the semi-arid grasslands to be broken to the plow, and soon thereafter to be washed or blown away.

When Warren G. Harding became President, he made Albert B. Fall his Secretary of the Interior. Oil had been struck on the Navajo lands, which still remained tribal, and apart from the Doheny and Sinclair oil scandals, the Teapot Dome affair and other jockeying over oil, another oil scandal, though an impersonal one, developed over the Navajo homelands.

Fall and the Indian Bureau concocted the so-called "Indian Omnibus Bill" which the House passed and which the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs reported favorably. Indian leaders drew up a petition and found a champion, Robert M. LaFollette, the elder, of Wisconsin, who succeeded at the eleventh hour in killing that bill on the Senate floor.

The intentions of the bill and its provisions may be briefly summarized.

The bill sought to individualize all tribal assets, not previously individualized; to pay to each individual in cash the appraised value of his atom of the assets; to have then quitclaimed to the government all future responsibility to these Indians. Many treaties would have been torn into scraps of paper by this one act of legislation; an orgy of loot would have been released, particularly against the tribes of Arizona and New Mexico, but also against the Klamaths of Oregon, the Menominees of Wisconsin, and the remaining tribes who had escaped allotment. For them the pittance in money they would receive would scarcely have compensated for the loss of their homes and lands and tribal unities, the roots of both their individual and com-

munal beings. Before Fall could renew his pressure for this bill, he had been driven from office.

Let us consider some of the other factors. Two-thirds of the Indian lands which still remained tribal were held by the Indians under Presidential decree, as distinguished from treaty. Oil was struck in the Navajo lands within the "Presidential decree" rather than the "Treaty" area of the tribe. Fall ruled that the oil belonged to the government, to dispose of as it might choose, and not to the tribe. The effect was to deny that the Indians owned some sixteen million acres of their own land, title to which had been confirmed in them by Executive Order. The Fall administration then set in motion an open drive, aimed principally at the Pueblo tribes, for the suppression of all the native Indian religions still existing.

Finally, although first in order of time (I have held it back because it requires more lengthy discussion), Fall pressed the notorious Bursum bill with all the powers at his command; and the Senate enacted it. Then a storm broke. The Pueblos determined to battle with all their resources.

The Pueblos of New Mexico hold their lands in common under grants from the Spanish Crown. Some of the grants were made direct to the tribes; others were made to whites who then sold title to the tribes. These grants were confirmed to the Pueblos by the Court of Private Land Claims of the United States during the 1890's. Hordes of non-Indians had encroached and continued to encroach on the Pueblos' grants. They usurped or helped themselves to the Indian-built improvements. For example, these lands had been irrigated by the tribes since hundreds of years before Columbus. Some of the tribal city-states lost the use of 90 per cent of their irrigated lands. But they refused to disperse.

The Supreme Court had ruled, in 1871, that the Pueblos were not "wards of the United States" and that their lands were not under government guardianship. Nevertheless, Congress appropriated the funds for Indian agents there, and for two large boarding schools where the young of the tribes would be detached from their homes and the break-up of the city-states be expedited. The Bureau did nothing to help prevent the continuing encroachments until 1913. Then it brought the question of Pueblo guardianship before the Supreme Court anew, and the Court reversed itself. Federal guardianship, it held, was complete, and had been continuous since New Granada had been taken from Spain. Hence, all encroachments, at least since 1848, had been illegal; the Pueblo title was perfect and unimpaired.

In 1918, through political chance, Richard H. Hanna, who at an earlier date had been Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New Mexico, became government attorney for the Pueblo tribes. Hanna, a man of real greatness, later to become famous as a defender of the Indians, insisted at this time that the government must move to recover the Pueblos' lands from the white dispossessors. He was allowed to file suits to quiet title. Delays were interposed by the Interior Department through the Department of Justice at Washington, and the suits dragged on until Harding became President and Fall became Secretary of the Interior.

Fall's bill in the Congress, known as the Bursum bill, was simple enough. It transferred the Pueblo title from the Indian owners to the white squatters. For good measure, it brought the internal affairs of the city-states under the jurisdiction of the United States District Court. This last might not seem so bad from an outside point of view; but it actually meant the attempted establishment of a religious inquisition, for the internal affairs of the Pueblos are completely involved in their religions. Among the Rio Grande Pueblos, the rule of secrecy is inviolable. Under the Fall-Bursum bill, the Indian Bureau would have been able to keep the priests, governors and other principal men of these tribes in jail for contempt of court, or whatever, for most of their lives.

No Pueblo Indian knew of the existence of this bill. It had been carefully guarded from its inception, and the press had missed it in the pressure of other matters. The Indian superintendents knew; but no one of these public servants hired to protect Indian interests and supposed to represent the Indian just as a lawyer is expected to defend his client—not one of them wanted or dared even anonymously to "leak" information to the Indian leaders—not even to a single Indian. During those days the tribes were immured.

As it happened, I was down there at the time—eleven years before I became Indian Commissioner. Antonio Luhan, of Taos Pueblo, guided and introduced me to the meeting that resulted in the discovery of the Fall-Bursum bill. In meetings lasting far into the night, the Fall-Bursum bill was read and explained and analyzed in English, in Tanoan (Tiguan), Tewan, Keresian and Zunian; it was so read at the meetings while old men of the tribe moaned, knowing it was a sentence of death.

At Cochiti Pueblo, Alcario Montoya started off the battle. He said: "We must unite as we did once before." He was referring to the ancient Pueblo rebellion of 1680, before there was a

United States, an uprising which had driven every white man out of New Granada. He did not mean by force of arms, which would have been ridiculous. He meant *before the law*—the law, guardian of justice, even among the white races and among all races.

And thus there came into being the Council of All the New Mexico Pueblos, which was to be the spearhead of the struggle of all the tribal Indians everywhere until after 1933. At Santo Domingo Pueblo, November 22, 1922, the All-Pueblo Council met—its second meeting in 242 years. All of New Mexico by that date was aflame over the Fall-Bursum bill; the artists and writers of Santa Fe and Taos joined in encouragement and deeds.

At Santo Domingo Pueblo it is usual for a family to live in a single great room; its beams are whole trees, blackened with age, and its walls within and without are snow-white, but hung with red chili, dried meat, and red, blue and dark-green dried corn. There are no beds, tables or chairs; the fireplace and the outdoor adobe oven, beehive-shaped, make the kitchen. One of these homes was the council chamber. The 123 Indian delegates were the religious and political headmen of the 19 tribes; they grouped themselves by languages, so that discourse proceeded simultaneously in English, Spanish and the four distinct root-languages of the New Mexico Pueblos. To the few whites who were present—they included Stella Atwood, and Mary Austin, and myself—the little assembly had a feeling of immensity. Far horizons seemed to stretch onward, and power seemed to flow from out remote ages. An element in the Pueblo world-view is that there exists a dimension not apprehended spatially and not subject to spatial description or limitation. That dimension is *intensity*; and it can be partly symbolized by the image of the indrawn and outflowing breath, in the instant present, of all time that ever was, all racial time and cosmic time, race and cosmos, personality and cosmos being one. To me, on the day of this All-Pueblo Council meeting, resumed after 242 years, there reached a certain sense of understanding that was to be renewed at many an Indian council meeting in years to come. Compared to Indian council meetings, our own legislative assemblies operate within a frame of reference exceedingly narrow, and take into account facts exceedingly few, and draw upon shallows of thought and emotion exceedingly thin.

The Council framed an appeal. "The time has come when we must live or die," the Council said, and went on to tell briefly about Pueblo life (the telling, as nearly always with tribal Indians, being of present life as related to an unextinguished, dy-

namic past and to the "long hope," the racial hope). They acted to send messengers to the United States, a delegation of seventeen of their representative men.

The Pueblo delegation went to the people of the country. It was superlatively skillful in presenting its case at gatherings in many cities, and even before the Stock Exchange of New York. Its case was an affirmative one. The governors of the tribes carried with them their silver-headed canes, symbols of authority bestowed by the Spanish Crown and long after by President Abraham Lincoln. Their organization, as wrought out after the great rebellion of 1680, represented the solitary flowering in full perfection and achievement of the Laws of the Indies and the philosophy of Bartolomé de Las Casas. Here was social continuity unbroken since the Stone Age, and here was Christianity deeply felt, at peace in the same breasts with pre-Columbian religions yet more deeply professed. Here was what John Marshall had intended for all Indians.

The Senate recalled the Fall-Bursum bill from the House, on motion of Senator William Borah, of Idaho; the stated ground was unusual within the tradition of Senatorial "courtesy." The Senate implied that it had passed the bill on the strength of a misrepresentation, innocent or otherwise, by its sponsor. Then in Congress a two-year struggle commenced—actually, an eleven-year struggle before the single issue of the Pueblos' lands had been concluded; but the battle front extended to the Indians everywhere and to the whole law, policy and system of Indian affairs. In March, 1923, the Fall Indian Omnibus bill was killed. In that same month the Senate's Indian Committee, again on the basis of a misrepresentation, reported favorably a Pueblo Lands bill which was only a little less ruinous than the Fall-Bursum bill had been. By that date, the Pueblo delegation had returned home. The Senate committee was misled to believe that the Pueblos, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, and the newly formed American Indian Defense Association, had been brought to endorse a bill-draft which transferred Pueblo title to whites, without compensation, but under a due-process-of-law formula whose despoiling outcome Congress would decree in the bill. The Pueblos, the Women's Clubs and the Defense Association repudiated the bill and denounced it and it died. But *de facto* the white squatters and settlers remained on the Pueblo lands, and many Pueblos continued to starve.

When Albert B. Fall passed from office, to be indicted, tried and imprisoned, all his piracies had been smashed; he had filled the role of the indispensable villain in the drama, needful at its

beginning. But the Indian Bureau moved automatically, implacably on. Its strategy of counterattack became manifest within a few months after the Pueblos had struck their first blow. The campaign followed these lines: The Pueblos and their friends were racketeers, taking money from the sympathetic public under false pretenses. They were anti-American, and subversive. In fact, they were "agents of Moscow." They were cultists of Indian paganism; and the pagan cults were horrible, sadistic and obscene. They were seeking to discredit and weaken the United States Government.

The Indian Bureau controlled ramifications of influence very far-reaching. Through the Home Mission Boards, it lined up the Protestant denominations in blanket apologetic acclaim for the Bureau and the Indian system. It immobilized the Franciscan order, which in 1922 had gone into action for and with the Pueblos. By 1924 it had split the General Federation of Women's Clubs wide open, had pushed Stella Atwood out from her chairmanship of the Federation's Indian committee, and had annexed the Federation's national officers to its own cause, although some of the State Federations battled on. It swung the Board of Indian Commissioners behind itself. This Board had been set up by President Grant as an unpaid body of virtuous men. The Bureau financed a competing, Bureau-controlled Council of All the New Mexico Pueblos. This never accomplished anything, but was symbolical. Opposing groups of white seekers of Indian welfare, including eminent names, found themselves, with some bewilderment, maneuvered into partnership with the Bureau.

But the tribes' insurgence widened and deepened far beyond liberal white sentiment toward them. It reached to the Great Plains tribes, to the Columbia Basin and the inter-mountain Indian country, to the Indian remnants in California. The tribes now had their common agenda for Indian affairs revolution; but wisely they decided to form no single, all-Indian nationwide organization. The American Indian Defense Association "served" them legislatively and through research and publication; but each of the hundreds of tribes, except the confederated Pueblos, characteristically strove ahead autonomously, each upon its own, yet in concert. The pressures which the Indian Bureau's system could command, and which it employed extravagantly, sometimes temporarily silenced one or another tribe, but the Indians' front was never broken. Thus the struggle continued for eleven years.

Commencing with the Pueblos' actions of 1922, the destruc-

tion of the native religions that yet lived was viewed by the Indian Bureau as a *political* necessity. The religions made the tribes strong, and made the individuals of the tribes immune to intimidation or corruption. The Bureau's new onslaught fell upon all the Pueblo native religions and upon the expanding, intertribal Native American Church. Federal and state enactments against the Native American Church were lobbied through by the Indian Bureau. Toward the Pueblo religions, methods more lurid were used.

The Bureau sent out inspectors. These men collected pornographic gossip about the tribes, among whom no pornography existed at all. Much of the gossip was unprintable. The Bureau submitted it for scrutiny to no Indian and to no ethnologist. The foul pages, numbering 193, were photostated and turned over to various emissaries under the seal of confidence, as well as to leading editors, churchmen and heads of women's organizations. I got my personal copy from the editor of the *Saturday Evening Post*, entirely innocently on his part.

Then the Bureau struck publicly. These "agents of Moscow," the Pueblos and their friends, according to the Bureau's publicists, were likewise the emissaries of pagan religions unspeakably bloody and foul, though, as a matter of common knowledge, the Pueblos were "pagan" but Christian too. Unprintable pornographic exhibits were circulated by the Bureau in 1923.

But Indian pressures continued, and increased, and the Pueblos went ahead as the spearhead. Then, in 1926, the Indian Bureau moved from defamation to action. Commissioner Charles H. Burke visited Taos Pueblo, and notified the old men in council assembled that they were "half animals" through their pagan religion. The Bureau forbade the withdrawal of Pueblo boys from school for their initiation ceremonies. The Pueblos as a body announced themselves ready for jail or any other penalty; the initiation ceremonies would go forward. Then the whole governing body of Taos Pueblo was thrown into prison for violating the Bureau's religious crimes code. The Pueblos struck back. They took their case to the religious press of the nation, and again addressed Congress.

Representative James A. Frear of Wisconsin went to the tribes to find out for himself. He became their irrepressible spokesman in the House Indian Committee and on the House floor. Senator William A. King of Utah pressed for a Senate investigation of Indian matters as a whole. Public indignation increased; publicity was widespread. The Federal District Court in New Mexico sent the jailed Taos Indian leaders back to their homes.

In 1924, a defective yet not wholly inoperable Pueblo Lands Act was passed by Congress. It "loaded the dice" against the recovery of their lands by the tribes, but directed that compensation be paid them under certain limiting conditions. The Act provided that a Pueblo Lands Board be set up to execute its terms. In this Board's proceedings, the Pueblos fought, under the handicap of a biased Board and a statute loaded against them, every step of the way. Richard H. Hanna became their attorney. Not until 1933, the first New Deal year, under a changed Indian Bureau, did the Pueblos finally win their battle for their lands. Then Congress, amending the defective Lands Act of 1924, and redressing the stubborn parsimony of the Lands Board and of the Federal District Court, granted a reasonable compensation to the tribes for their lands lost under the Lands Act; and it forbade the expenditure of any of the tribal funds thus created (about \$1,300,000) without tribal consent.

In 1926, Congress reversed the Albert B. Fall order which denied the Indian title to the Executive Order lands (some 16,000,000 acres), which had been repudiated in 1924 by Attorney-General, later Supreme Court Chief Justice Harlan Stone.

In 1927, under the mounting pressures, and in the face of a threatened Senate investigation of Indian Affairs, Secretary of the Interior Hubert Work invited the Institute of Public Affairs of Washington (the Brookings Institution) to make an investigation. The investigation was made, at a cost of \$125,000 privately supplied. Its results were published in a truly monumental book in the field, *The Problem of Indian Administration*. That was in 1928. The findings and conclusions supported the case the Indians had made. Before that publication, the Senate had overridden the resistances of the Indian Bureau and adopted the King resolution, launching the Senate's investigation of Indian affairs.

That investigation blasted the record wide open. The Senate's committee traveled to every part of the Indian country, and the tribes were ready with their case. After one year, Commissioner Burke, in a public outcry, charged that Senator Pine of Oklahoma, Republican, and I were in a conspiracy to destroy the authority of the United States government in Indian affairs. The Senate committee demanded evidence; Burke had none to give; he resigned. The Assistant Indian Commissioner, Edgar B. Merritt, who had dominated Indian affairs since 1912, followed Burke in two months.

This abbreviated account of the years from 1922 to 1929 leaves many interrelated struggles of the Indians and their

friends undescribed. The prolonged battle by the State of California, for instance, on behalf of its Indians. That began in 1924. The struggle, ultimately successful, to block the Indian Bureau's and the Montana Power Company's attempt to confiscate the giant power site of the Flathead tribe; the struggle, ultimately successful, to prevent the transfer of the Walapai tribe's lands, without compensation, to the Santa Fe railroad; the struggle to bring to an end the starvation of Indian children in the government boarding schools (where the Bureau was feeding them on as little as seven cents per pupil per day); and the struggle to force the Indian Bureau to allow the Indians to receive technical aid from other branches of the Federal Government—these are examples. They fade into history, and only this significance is given them now—that they were prosecuted as episodes and vehicles of one integrated effort, withal an effort dispersed among more than two hundred tribes. The tribes were counseled and helped by more than a hundred of the best legal and public affairs brains in the country, individuals whose names, even, are not mentioned here; and the integrated program had few and simple principles.

These principles were: That Indians were entitled to the traditional American liberties, which included freedom of conscience, freedom of communication, freedom to organize politically and economically; freedom to use their assets productively, and to control them; access to the benefits of the general government (to which, indirectly and also directly, the Indians had contributed more of material wealth than any other population group); and freedom to draw upon the wellsprings of whatever genius, fed from the mountains of whatever past, might be theirs.

The four years 1929–33, under Herbert Hoover as President, Ray Lyman Wilbur as Secretary of the Interior, and Charles J. Rhoads as Indian Commissioner, witnessed some amelioration. W. Carson Ryan, as the new Educational Director of Indian Service, brought the most modern of educational thinking to bear in the schools. By intent, under him the schools no longer strove to break the relationship of the generations, to stifle the flow of language in young minds, or to blight the Indian cultures. In the area of broad intent, Secretary Wilbur and Commissioner Rhoads affixed their signatures to policy statements that went far. They described the ruining work which land allotment had done and was doing. They called for tribal organization under statute, particularly tribal corporate organization. They pointed out the injustices and the waste of time and life in-

volved in the piecemeal, niggardly and so often hypocritical adjudication of tribal claims for money damages against the government. They did not, however, move any of these programs into attempted legislation. They did not check the diversion of nearly five million dollars a year of Indian capital funds into the running costs of the government's Indian Service. They allowed Indian Service to continue to avert its gaze from the huge process of soil erosion which was destroying the basis of Indian life. They did not appeal to the spirit of the Indian. They *did* put a stop to the pyramiding of debt against Indians in the process of building costly structures needed by whites; and they obtained from Congress the authority to remit unjust and wastefully imposed indebtedness of the tribes to the government. The ebb tide of Indian life had ceased to run; the flood tide, held back by the old system, was slowly coming in.

The tribes were patient for two years, and then resumed their pressures. Nothing less than the basic changes which they had been seeking since 1922 could give them their chance. They knew this from the long dark generations before 1929. "Terminate the executive absolutism," they insisted (to paraphrase words of theirs). "Terminate it by law. *Enfranchise our societies*. Empower and implement our own collective life. Benignant absolutism which perpetuates absolutism is malign, not benign."

CHAPTER 14

*The Indian New Deal*¹

IN MARCH, 1933, Franklin D. Roosevelt entered into office as President of the United States. Harold L. Ickes became the new Secretary of the Interior. I was appointed the new Indian Commissioner.

I had been learning a great deal about the American Indian himself, and about other men and women who knew the Indian, for over twelve years; and my staff and I, always with the firm support of Harold L. Ickes and the active and personal interest of the President, formulated a set of principles that have remained dominant. They may be summarized this way:

First, Indian societies must and can be discovered in their

¹Parts of this chapter are taken from the writer's "The Indian Administration as a Laboratory in Ethnic Affairs," *Social Research*, Vol. 12, No. 3, 1945.

continuing existence, or regenerated, or set into being *de novo* and made use of. This procedure serves equally the purposes of those who believe the ancient Indian ways to be best and those who believe in rapid acculturation to the higher rather than the lower levels of white life.

Second, the Indian societies, whether ancient, regenerated or created anew, must be given status, responsibility and power.

Third, the land, held, used and cherished in the way the particular Indian group desires, is fundamental in any lifesaving program.

Fourth, each and all of the freedoms should be extended to Indians, and in the most convincing and dramatic manner possible. In practice this included repeal of sundry espionage statutes, guarantee of the right to organize, and proclamation and enforcement of cultural liberty, religious liberty, and unimpeded relationships of the generations.

Fifth, the grant of freedom must be more, however, than a remission of enslavements. Free for what? Organization is necessary to freedom: help toward organizing must be extended by the government. Credit is necessary to freedom; co-operatively managed credit must be supplied. Knowledge is necessary to freedom: education in terms of live local issues and problems must be supplied through activity programs in the schools; technological and business and civic education must be supplied to adults; professional and collegiate training must be opened to the post-adolescent group. Responsibility is necessary to freedom: one responsibility is perpetuation of the natural resources, and conservation must be made mandatory on the tribes, by statute. Capital goods are necessary to freedom, and responsibility must be applied to capital goods: a tribe that handles its revolving credit fund irresponsibly must know that shrunken credit will be its lot tomorrow.

And now, the sixth principle: The experience of responsible democracy, is, of all experiences, the most therapeutic, the most disciplinary, the most dynamogenic and the most productive of efficiency. In this one affirmation we, the workers who knew so well the diversity of the Indian situation and its inalcitrancy toward monistic programs, were prepared to be unreserved, absolute, even at the risk of blunders and of turmoil. We tried to extend to the tribes a self-governing self-determination without any limit beyond the need to advance by stages to the goal. Congress let us go only part way, but the part way, when administrative will was undeviating, proved to be enough. Often the administrative will was not undeviating, often the

administrative resourcefulness was not enough, often the Gulliver's threads of the land allotment system and of civil service and the appropriation systems kept the administrator imprisoned. The establishment of living democracy, profound democracy, is a high art; it is the ultimate challenge to the administrator. The Indian Service since 1933 has practiced the art, has met the challenge, in ways varied enough and amid situations diversified enough to enable one to give a verdict which seems genuinely momentous: the democratic way has been proved to be enormously the efficient way, the genius-releasing and the nutritive and life-impelling way, and *the way of order*.

The seventh principle I would call the first and the last: That research and then more research is essential to the program, that in the ethnic field research can be made a tool of action essential to all the other tools, indeed, that it ought to be the master tool. But we had in mind a particular kind of research impelled from central areas of needed action. Since action is by nature not only specialized but also integrative of specialties, and nearly always integrative of more than the specialties, our needed research must be of the integrative sort. Again, since the findings of the research must be carried into effect by the administrator and the layman, and must be criticized by them through their experience, the administrator and the layman must themselves participate creatively in the research, impelled as it is from their own area of need. Through such integrative research, in 1933, the Soil Conservation Service directly originated in the ecological and economic problems of the Navajo Indian tribe. In current years integrative research (the administrator and layman always participating) has pushed far back our horizons of knowledge and understanding of a whole series of the tribes, and has searched our policies, administration, personnel and operating methods to their foundations. I add, in passing, that such research invariably has operated to deepen our realization of the potentialities of the democratic way, as well as our realization of our own extreme, pathetic shortcomings.

In 1934 the Indian Reorganization bill was laid before Congress, where the hearings on it lasted several months. Some people ridiculed this bill because it contained 52 printed pages. They forgot that it was offered as a successor to the greater part of several thousand pages of Indian law. Until 1934, Indian tribes rarely had been consulted on the legislation introduced for their supposed benefit. In preparing this bill, however, the Indian office first sent to all the tribes questions concerning

the Indian problems deemed to be central. Then the bill was furnished them all. Finally, congresses of Indians were held in all the regions, gatherings in which practically every tribe in the United States was represented.

As originally introduced in Congress the bill had six parts.

1. The Indian societies were to be recognized, and be empowered and helped to undertake political, administrative and economic self-government.

2. Provision was made for an Indian civil service and for the training of Indians in administration, the professions and other vocations.

3. Land allotment was to be stopped, and the reversion of Indians with land was provided for.

4. A system of agricultural and industrial credit was to be established, and the needed funds authorized.

5. Civil and criminal law enforcement, below the level reached by federal court jurisdiction, was to be set up under a system of courts operating with simplified procedures and ultimately responsible to the tribes.

6. The consolidation of fractionalized allotted lands, and the delivery of allotments back into the tribal estate, was provided for under conditions which safeguarded all individual property rights and freedoms.

The first four parts of the Reorganization bill, as listed, became law. The fifth and sixth parts were lost. The fifth part may have been fortunately lost, because the tribes, under the enacted parts of the bill and under court decisions defining the unextinguished, inherent powers of Indian tribes, are coping with law and order more effectively with each passing year. But the loss of the sixth part was a major disaster to the Indians, the Indian service and the program. Congress has not yet righted that blunder of 1934. The fractionalizing of allotted Indian lands rushes on; the real estate operation of leasing these atomized parcels and collecting and accounting for and paying out the hundreds of thousands of vanishing incomes becomes increasingly costly, and increasingly a barrier against productive work or thinking in the allotted jurisdictions; millions of their best acres remain unusable to the Indians.

In the meantime, however, the Indian Service and the tribes are struggling to reverse the flood that is eating away the Indians' land-base. This is being done through voluntary exchanges and relinquishments, which require contact with each of the all but

innumerable heirs—fifty heirship equities may vest in one Indian, and one allotment may have hundreds of scattered heirs. Despite the difficulties, the wasting flood has been checked and reversed in a few jurisdictions. It is only where this occurs that there can be a beginning of the positive program of using Indian lands through Indian effort. The situation was fully recognized in the report of the House Sub-committee on Indian Investigation, issued in December, 1944. In passing so lightly over this very important subject I wish only to add that in this matter, too, the Indians are wrestling with a problem widely encountered in other lands. One of the heavy drags on the agricultural economy of Asiatic India, for example, is the ever-increasing fractionalization of farm holdings. The formulae that are being successfully used here in the United States (but far too gradually, in the absence of the Congressional authority sought but not obtained) have application in Europe and in Asia.

The Reorganization bill, as finally enacted, contained a requirement that every tribe should accept or reject it in a referendum held by secret ballot. Those who accepted the act could organize under it for local self-government. Through a subsequent referendum they could organize themselves as federal corporations chartered for economic enterprise. Ultimately, about three-fourths of the Indians of the United States and Alaska came within the act. A related enactment, the Johnson-O'Malley Act, also passed in 1934, provided for the devolution of federal power to states and other political subdivisions, and for the enlistment of private agencies in the Indian task, through a flexible system of contracts and of grants-in-aid.

The Indian Service, on the basis of this legislation and impelled by the principles enumerated above, has striven to the end that every one of the particular programs—conservation, the cattle program, community organization, schools, the credit program, health, the Indian branch of the Civilian Conservation Corps and the other depression-years programs, the arts and crafts work—that every particular program should serve the primary aims of freeing or regenerating the Indian societies, and infusing them with the spirit of democracy, implementing them with democratic tools, and concentrating their attention upon their basic practical exigencies. Year after year, and cumulatively with the years, we who were doing the work observed sadly our partial failures, here and there our complete failures. Yet we also witnessed a development that has far outweighed the deficiencies.

We have seen the Indian prove himself to be the best credit

risk in the United States: of more than \$10,300,000 loaned across ten years, only \$69,000 is today delinquent. We have seen the Indian beef-cattle holdings (nearly always they are managed co-operatively) increase 105 per cent in number of animals and 2,300 per cent in yield of animal products; and we have seen this increase take place on ranges that in varying measures were gutted by erosion caused by overgrazing twelve years ago, and now, in general, are overgrazed and gutted no more. We have watched scores of ancient tribal systems reorient themselves toward modern tasks, while more than a hundred tribal democracies have been newly born and have lived and marched out into life; these democracies are political, industrial and social. We have witnessed the Indian peoples giving themselves with ardor and discipline to the war; 25,000 of their young people have served in the armed forces, with the highest volunteering record, we believe, of any population in the country. Finally, we have seen the Indian death rate more than cut in half, and for this achievement the expanded and improved clinical services supply only a partial explanation: the changed anticipation, from death to life, the world winds that blow at last within what were the reservation compounds, the happiness and excitement of democratic striving and clashing and living—this is the significant explanation of a 55 per cent decrease in the death rate in less than ten years.

Indian affairs can be viewed not only as of significance in themselves; they can also be seen as an ethnic laboratory of universal meaning.

The story of Acoma, a pueblo in New Mexico, is the story of how a sky city came down to earth and the stone age overshot the modern mark. It is also a story with a lesson for us all today.

Twenty-two years ago the Indian Bureau had been driving hard against the Pueblos' religious unity. The particular issue was an attempt by the government to forbid Pueblo boys from going through the initiation vigils and disciplines during which they were taught the mystic lore and were made into men. Acoma wanted to know what to do about this issue, and three of us went there from California. We hired an old Ford for the occasion and drove across the desert to the so-called town of McCarthy's in search of the Governor of Acoma.

An Acoma boy met us on the way and ran ahead to notify the Governor. There he learned that the Governor had departed on foot for Acomita, fifteen miles east. The boy ran to Acomita; but on arriving he mistakenly told the Governor that we were journeying to meet him at Old Acoma, the sky city. The three

towns mentioned form a triangle, and each is fifteen miles from the other.

When we reached McCarthy's, a little while before sundown, we learned that the Governor was at Acomita. We drove to Acomita. There we learned that he had departed on foot for Old Acoma to greet us; when the boy runner had given him the mistaken information the Governor had been at Acomita only a few minutes, having run there on some Governor's business from McCarthy's. The Governor, a Carlisle graduate, was seventy years old.

It was night now, but moonlight. We drove to Old Acoma. And when we had climbed to that city of dreams, up the long sand dune that breaks against its higher crags, we learned that the Governor had discovered his mistake and had run back to McCarthy's. So we drove to McCarthy's, lost our way, our headlights went off, and shortly before dawn, by the light of a waning moon, we tumbled down the steep rocky road from the higher country and found ourselves at McCarthy's. We were tired and we hoped to sleep. But there in his house sat the Governor, his Principal Men around him. He had run forty-five miles, but had not thought of rest. Coffee and bread were awaiting us, and we launched into a meeting that lasted till afternoon. Then the Governor said to us, "Now you friends go to my inner room and sleep. I've got some irrigation ditches to look after."

This incident, rather than the greater subtleties, intensities and mysteries of Acoma, comes to my memory as I try to summarize what happened there in subsequent years. Acoma lives by virtue of the Ancients. They are within the wills of the living men of Acoma; the future must be saved for them. But equally true of Acoma is Swinburne's image of the world wave which "rolls under the whitening wind of the future." Our conventionalized apprehensions, semantically and mechanistically thought-bound, do not quite apply to Acoma. Its deepest solemnities are shot through with gaiety; merrymaking surrounds the rituals and vigils upon whose efficacy life, and the Planet itself, are believed dependent. Through the deep-based security and assurance of the Ancients, Acoma is carefree, and it delivers itself to joy and to work, with nothing held back. The eagle soaring, the patient beast at the plow, the desert cactus and the plum and peach blossom, the old Governor who runs all night, deliberates all day and then goes to tend the ditches, who is not tired and does not scold the boy who told him wrong—all these are Acoma, but, sociologically, none of them is symbol enough. Acoma is also a primary social group which is at the same time a

complex city-state whose life-giving democracy strikes across and beyond all the forms; it is a summation of the stimuli of an enormous past whose nurture and motivation are institutionally insured and wrought into happy, dauntless personalities; and it is a capacity for social action in the face of new emergencies.

In 1933, Acoma had about a thousand people, and its numbers were growing. Irrigation farming could not be much extended. The cash crop and main sustenance was cattle and sheep, but the government had encouraged maximum livestock numbers, and Acoma's lands were seriously eroded, the erosion accelerating each year. In its wounded condition the range could support 8,500 sheep units without being further wrecked. The sheep units on the land numbered 33,000.

In the West, overgrazing is the principal cause of soil wastage, and at Acoma it was the only cause. Overgrazing results not from greed and shortsightedness alone, but from the failure to use ecological and social knowledge, and from economic and social pressures that may sometimes appear remote. Ranges close to the Spanish-American villages in New Mexico are often hideously abused, and they have to be abused, because the villagers, who require at least a minimum of livestock for their subsistence, have been pushed off by the big commercial grazers from the ample ranges they used two generations ago. On the vast Navajo reservation the truly appalling soil wastage is due to the circumstance that for many decades the government encouraged and practically compelled the Navajos into a one-crop economy, sheep and goats, and, though their population was multiplying, Congress forbade them to extend their landholdings, as it forbids them now. Acoma was in a similar plight. Though conservation had been made mandatory upon Indian lands, under the Indian Reorganization Act, we knew that the exigency must be met, if it could be met at all, by methods having nothing to do with compulsion.

Since 1933, soil conservation has called into being a new integration of subject-matters and disciplines, natural and human. The soil conservation operation is conceived complexly, and as a process covering a rather long time. To be specific, soil conservation necessitates range-rest, reseeding, contour furrowing, water spreading, the vegetative healing of gullies and canyons. It requires a new enterprise and resourcefulness in animal genetics. Of livestock-owning populations that are near the subsistence level it demands changed methods of herd management and marketing and, usually, a shift for a long or brief period—usually long—to a more diversified economy. All this has deep-

reaching effects, social as well as natural. The mere reduction of livestock may affect rather profoundly the status system within a social group. It strikes at individual security and it smashes headlong into habitual practices and expectancies.

In the light of these facts the significance of what Acoma did becomes manifest.

The Soil Conservation Service had ascertained the Acoma facts. The responsibility of finding the answer fell upon the superintendent of the United Pueblo Agency. That superintendent, I may mention, was a woman. In 1936 she invited the officers of Acoma, and in time the whole population, into conferences with her staff and the Soil Conservation staff. There the appalling fact was told them, that if their lands were to survive they must reduce from 33,000 to 8,500 sheep units. This was no command from the government. There was no fiat, and there would be none. Acoma was merely being furnished the facts, and it would also be furnished technical assistance, if desired. The conferences lasted through days, weeks, months. Gradually they broadened and deepened, and passed from point to point, until much of what was known about soil saving was known by the Acomas. The whole deep, living past of Acoma, with the vision of the ages to come and of the land to be saved for those ages, slowly absorbed the new facts and adopted their challenge. The thing was done. Acoma effected the crushing reduction, went through with all the sacrifices, applied conservation science through its whole gamut. And Acomas saw the ranges begin to heal, saw the weight and fleece of the residual animals increase, saw their sales prices soar through collective marketing.

The Soil Conservation districts, now numbering thousands, came into existence subsequent to Acoma's achievement, and came to be one of the most creative expressions of democracy in our American world. Acoma, with Laguna pueblo nearby, and the vast Navajo territory to the northwest, was the pioneering Soil Conservation area, and none in the white world has approached it in severity of sacrifice and brilliance of accomplishment.

Yet elsewhere in the famous watershed of the Rio Grande River, with its white cities, pueblos and villages of Spanish-Americans, the soil-saving effort has smashed into more resistant habits and vested interests. That valley and all its human treasure is doomed to ruin within the lifetime of men living now, unless the accelerating soil wastage of the whole watershed is stopped. It is not being stopped yet, although all the technical and organizational ways are known.

I have given a good deal of space to Acoma, not only because concrete and narrative statement is better than summary and abstract statement, but also because in the light of later experience it seems to me to represent more than just Acoma, or Indians in the face of modern challenges, or soil conservation democratically pursued.

For one thing, the refusal to use coercion, and instead the procedure of patiently waiting and skillfully endeavoring until the Pueblos' own central will took a painful task unto itself, had several specific rewards. Acoma did not develop bitterness and resistance toward social programs, toward technicians and "theorists," but on the contrary, developed confidence in them, and enthusiasm. Again, assuming that the soil conservation job had to be done—and it certainly had to be done—the government saved itself unknown amounts of money, probably millions, by using social science and relying on the principle of democracy. Further, no divorce was created between the old, lasting life, its consecrations and hopes, and the new life; instead, the old life created the new, and no dichotomy arose at all, no split in the community organization, no conflict between fundamentalism and science, and *no conflict between world-views*. The Acoma personality saved itself whole.

For another thing, Acoma refuted the stubborn error that Indians are segregated within their societies, immured within them from the world. It was within their society, for their society, by virtue of its powers, that the people of Acoma flashed beyond the world-present into the world-future.

I have emphasized the complex, the really multi-dimensional character of soil conservation science. It is ecological, drawing upon all the social sciences and requiring that the mind and the will shall dwell upon wholes—complex wholes—and shall contemplate a long time-process. I believe that the Indians of Acoma have a personality structure and bent of mind similar to that discovered among the Hopis 250 miles northwest of Acoma.

This personality structure and bent of mind become manifest quite far down in the age scale. If any one word can describe their quality it is the word *holistic*—the capacity to entertain complex wholes, and to maintain the complexities in a dynamic equilibrium. It is what one might anticipate from knowing the age-old nature of the Pueblo city-state: its necessary struggle, never intermitted, to survive in a desert environment amid foes pressing from every side, where abortive judgments might bring death; this struggle never exclusively extroverted, however, but always, as its first and last reliance, attending to the deepening

of will and consciousness within the individual, and profoundly persuading man that the universe itself is dependent on the human intensity of thought and of will, achieved within tranquillity. In such city-states the holistic and artistic bent of mind is the very inmost fact and the guarantor of survival power. Such is the bent of mind which can easily master the complexities of the soil conservation program.

This discovery which we have made among the Hopis, even if it does not prove to hold good for all the Pueblo tribes, modifies our perspective upon these tribes. We see them as being not backward in time but forward in time; competent not merely to deliver their individuals into a civilizational level which the country knows now, but into a civilizational level far beyond the American standard of today. If our perspective be thus changed, if we see these tribes in this way, our administration, our education, our system and required quality of personnel, are indeed challenged. It is the *future* Indian service that must meet the challenge. So far it has not met it, except in spirit and by intention.

Now another and contrasting story, this one about the Navajos, those most magnetic of all Indians. When Kit Carson destroyed all the three thousand fruit trees in Canyon de Chelly and the Navajos were exiled to eastern New Mexico, they numbered probably 12,000. That was in 1863. Today they number 55,000, and they increase at more than 2 per cent each year. Their 16 million desert and semi-desert acres rival in beauty any of the scenic splendors to be found on our globe. There is a great forest, too, and underground there is oil, and there are 60 billion tons, more or less, of low-grade coal.

But the land itself, as distinct from these timber and mineral resources, could not support 5,000 whites. For several decades the government urged the Navajos toward sheep and always more sheep, even forbidding them to sell the breeding ewes. A huge overload of stock developed, and erosion on a monstrous scale. The Navajos have the money (from oil) to buy new land, and they offer to pay the local taxes on any land they buy, but Congress holds their cash; the Budget Bureau, too, is loath to see the Navajos pay local taxes. So new land remains unbought. A large irrigable area awaits a grant of irrigation construction money from Congress. Almost the first action of the administration which took over Indian affairs in 1933 was to send a Commission to the Navajo country. The Navajo tribal council met in July of that year, and the Commission reported direct to the council. Its report was not very different from the one that

was subsequently made to Acoma pueblo in 1936. The tribal council was deeply shaken. It returned home, sought advice, and came again to say that facts were facts; erosion must be stopped; the stock overload must be reduced to carrying capacity.

That was twelve years ago. Today, on the Navajo reservation, anguish of a spirit is a wolf against the breast, and struggle rages, hardly less than any year before. There are no large lines of the endeavor which the Indian Service would erase if it could go back.

The Navajos are widely scattered over their lands, which equal a sixth of the total area of New Mexico. As a tribe, they are not a primary social group; their primary groups are many hundreds of extended families and little neighborhoods. Nor did they have in the past any consecutive organization of the tribe as a tribe. Their political government dates only from 1923, and until 1933 it was a yes-man government with severely limited powers.

It was this young, immature and hitherto narrowly circumscribed institution of government that had thrust upon it the overwhelming and urgent problem of reducing stock and controlling soil erosion. Other responsibilities and authorities were extended to the tribal council at the same time, and reorganization and enlargement of the council were pressed. Then, in a little more than a year, the Navajos, like the other tribes, were required to choose, by secret-ballot referendum, under a universal franchise, whether they would adopt or reject the Indian Reorganization Act. Acceptance would have made the conservation of resources mandatory upon them. But the Navajos rejected it by a very narrow margin, and thereby, for a decade, lost access to the credit fund, the land purchase fund and the system of orderly devolution of powers to the tribe, which were provided for in the act.

Greatly telescoping the record, I set it down that again and again over the years the elected tribal council affirmed the conservation program, enacted the implementing ordinances, struggled with the people over the issue and went into defeat at the next election. The struggles over this single subject so monopolized the field of debate and of decision that in nearly all other matters the political development of the tribe was stopped dead. In 1946 the tribal council operated without an executive committee or any standing committee.

Of eighteen Navajo districts, all but five have reduced their stock to carrying capacity, and those five will soon do so. The sheep genetics laboratory of the Navajos has produced from the

ancient Navajo breed an offspring as hardy as his sires and heavier in meat and fleece, which yields multi-purpose wool. Stockwater and irrigation developments have increased the reservation's agricultural potential by the equivalent of as many sheep as have been taken from the range. But the population grows faster and faster—the human population. The Navajos feel that they have submitted to conservation, not that they have achieved it.

Nearly all of us see this as the most important fact: The Indian Service has not had, or has not used, the means whereby it could reach the intellect and the psyche and the social opinion of the Navajos at the "grass roots." One who goes quietly there, to the homes and little neighborhoods, and stays a while, encounters ample capacity to think, ample readiness to think and a deep and often sad sentiment of responsibility toward the people and their land. The barrier of language is a very heavy obstacle, but a heavier one is the awareness in the wise Navajos themselves that whatever their perceptions and their understandings may be, there exists no mechanism for translating the insights and impulses into tribal decisions and actions. As for the Indian Service, driven, veritably hounded, by the exigent over-all requirements, it has not often dared to pause and to try to think through and feel through the problem of how the service and the issues can be merged with each of the local communities, one by one.

I do not present the Navajo record as one demonstrating the failure of a democratic attempt which was energetically pressed. I do not even ask whether it might have been a wiser course, in this one case of stock reduction and range management, to have used authority, frankly and absolutely (the authority existed), and not to have cast upon the new and groping political democracy of the tribe so crushing a weight. Nor do I ask whether it might have been better to take no notice, for a few years more (as the prior administrations had taken no notice), of the dread erosion situation, and to have devoted to community organization among the Navajos, and the development of subsidiary natural resources, the energies which were flung lavishly into the conservation enterprise—to have done this for a few years, without hurling the administrative energies along the line of greatest resistance, the stock reduction issue.

It is more useful to look forward. Conservation is very near to accomplishment on the Navajo lands. An outlet for tribal migration is likely to be achieved soon, and before very long

the decisive irrigation potentialities of the San Juan basin, in the northeast corner of the Navajo reservation, will possibly be realized. Therefore now (remembering that now is beginning as well as end) is the time for the Indian Service to pause, to go out and stay among the grass-roots communities, to start building diversely not eighteen land-use districts but hundreds of diverse Navajo local communities. No potency of Navajo life that existed in 1933 is absent today. Now as before, there is no people, anywhere, among whom *esprit* and *élan vital* are more regnant. The looming material disasters, which in 1933 and afterward seemed to demand the immediate and uniform action of those years, have been overcome or are almost overcome, and a wealth of knowledge and experience has been accumulated.

The ethnic laboratory of nearly three hundred Indian tribes has yielded richly, will yield more richly in the years ahead, and its yields do not conform with any one line of presupposition. Yes—there is one line of presupposition that it bears out. Making people free by helping them to confront real emergencies which they are capable of mastering is equivalent to the creation of new human and social energies. This effect is particularly dramatic when the freed peoples have been for a hundred years—as were our Indians—imprisoned within the fatalisms of unrealistic alternatives. This lesson, of world import, is taught equally by the contrasting Navajo and Acoma records. In the Navajo case a reliance placed on the historical political forms and dynamics of Europe and white America was confuted by the event. At Acoma, if the Indian Service had done less than cast the difficult load onto the whole pueblo organization the happy outcome would have been unlikely. Even if the particular practical result could have been won by the lesser means, the effect would have been to deprive the pueblo as an institution of a supreme opportunity. A truly deep democratic action was achieved at Acoma precisely by not seeking to persuade that action into a conventional European and white American mold.

This task of the guardian government, to make free the peoples who are its dependencies, demands not only sincerity of disinterested purpose but also deep knowledge of what those peoples are, and of the material environment within which they have their being. In particular (and this is true of all human life) what they are must be known in relation to what they must conquer. Here we verge upon social planning, which is just now beginning, and upon administration as art and science,

which is also just beginning. In dealing with pre-industrial and pre-literate peoples, with colonies and dependencies, it has been the rule to rush in where angels would tread very cautiously. I mean, customary for dominant and guardian governments and religious and social missionaries and investment bankers thus to rush. Acoma and the Navajos, both, out of somewhat opposite records, raise their voices for knowledge and more knowledge, wisdom and more wisdom, and all possible freedom from the panic of haste, in the dealings which are upon us—the inescapable dealings—with the ethnic groups of Oceania and Asia, the Caribbean and Africa and our Western Hemisphere countries. Hundreds of millions of people raise or will raise the same voice that Acoma and the Navajos raise now.

It is no contradiction that even blunderingly making dependent peoples free to grapple with real emergencies is hygienic, life-releasing and life-saving. The apparent contradiction is canceled out with time, if the administrator is faithful to the spirit of science, to the spirit of that knowledge which he has not yet mastered. It is from the needs of action that knowledge is dynamically empowered. Imperfect action is better for men and societies than perfection in waiting, for the errors wrought by action are cured by new action. When the people acted upon are themselves made true partners in the actions, and co-discoverers of the corrections of error, then through and through, and in spite of blunders or even by virtue of them, the vital energies are increased, confidence increases, power increases, experience builds toward wisdom, and the most potent of all principles and ideals, deep democracy, slowly wins the field. This presupposition of the Indian administration since 1933 has been borne out by all of the experience.

Another conclusion that holds significance for dependencies everywhere pertains to the technical instrument, the Indian Reorganization Act itself. Over Indian matters, as over offshore dependencies, Congress still holds plenary power. But in the Indian Reorganization Act, and in some other related Indian statutes, Congress through general legislation has adopted self-restraining ordinances. The Reorganization act furnishes a flexible system for the devolution of authority from the government, including Congress, to the tribes. The Johnson-O'Malley Act furnishes the machinery for devolution from the federal institution to local subdivisions of government. The Pueblo Lands Act places the Pueblo tribal corporations in control of the communal monies. It is true that all three of these acts explicitly or by implication affirm that federal responsibility shall

continue, no matter how far the devolution shall go. They contemplate that a single, integrated agency of administration shall continue to exist, charged with the effectuation and defense of the Congressional policies. At the same time, however, this power of defense includes defense against Congressional attack on the policies; and, in addition, the acts contemplate that the single, integrated agency shall procure the needed services rather than itself supplying them. The Reorganization Act offends many prejudices and blocks the ambitions of many and powerful groups, and therefore it has been under attack within Congress every year since it was enacted. Yet it has not been repealed or weakened in any item. The act which freed the Indians and moved the administration toward diversity of program and method has proved to be also a conserving and stabilizing measure.

The policies established by legislation in 1934 have withstood every attack, except the attack through appropriations. Increasingly in recent years the appropriations acts of Congress have been made vehicles of covert legislation. The appropriations sub-committees, especially in the House of Representatives, are all but autonomous; the House gives only a fiction of deliberative consideration to the annual supply bills. In numberless cases Congress has concluded after careful deliberation that such and such policies shall be law, and has then proceeded to rubber-stamp appropriation bills which nullify and reverse the policies.

Specifically, in the Indian field, land acquisition for Indians, authorized by Congress, is blocked through the appropriation bills; the situation is similar with respect to the expansion of the Indian co-operative credit system. Congress legislated that Indian tribes and corporations should be given technical advice and assistance in their operations, and then the appropriation act nullified the legislation. The United States entered into treaty with thirteen other Western Hemisphere countries, and by the treaty pledged herself to maintain a National Indian Institute; the House subcommittee on Interior Department appropriations has flaunted the treaty commitment. In general, the appropriation acts have handicapped the Indian Service and the Indians in the realization of every democratic, libertarian policy that Congress has established as the law of the land.

This anomaly of our Congressional system has effects, of course, far beyond Indians and dependencies and ethnic problems. Precisely because it is an evil of so universal a reach, we may expect it to be corrected in times ahead. While it lasts, it

hangs like a gloomy shadow over the Indians and over territories and dependencies such as Alaska, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

From the Indian record we can draw these conclusions:

First, biological racehood, whether it exists or not, is without practical importance. There accumulate within and around races that are biologically distinguishable, and within and around races that are not biologically distinguishable, those in-group and out-group factors whose aggregate is called "racial." The factors are socially caused and socially transmitted.

Second, in ethnic matters, as in other vital matters, governmental intervention can be baneful or benign. In any field of human relations, when government tries to do the whole job, authoritatively and monopolistically, the result is baneful. The earlier Indian record is replete with evidence of this. But when government makes research an inseparable part of its ethnic operations, eschews monopoly, acts as a catalytic and co-ordinating agent, offers its service through grants-in-aid to local subdivisions, then government can be decisively benign, as the recent Indian record demonstrates. It is of national importance, and necessary to the good role of our Occidental governments in the world, that ethnic groups shall have equality of opportunity, shall be enabled to contribute their ideals and genius to the common task, shall not suffer discriminations, shall be free to breathe deeply the breath of public life. The Bill of Rights and the Constitution within the United States, the Charter of United Nations in the world, must be made good. It follows that governments and the federation of governments should and must concern themselves with ethnic matters, and that the methods should be right and not wrong.

Third, the individual fares best when he is a member of a group faring best. All human beings, in young childhood at least, are members of groups. The group is the tree and they are the fruit it bears. At least up to a certain age-level, the individual reft from his group is hurt or destroyed. The ruin inflicted on Red Indians through the white man's denial of their grouphood, and his leading them to deny their own grouphood, is only a special case of something that is universal. It may be that contemporary white life is being injured nearly as much by the submergence of its primary social groupings as the denial of Indian grouphood injured Indian life. If the primary social group in white life were regenerated for full functioning, through resourceful and sustained social effort, and were dynamically connected once more with the great society, the hygienic and cre-

ative results might be no less startling than those observed in the comeback of Indian societies.

Fourth, in ethnic groups of low prestige the apparent inferiority (acquired or innate) may mask an actual superiority. In most Indian groups the academic lag of children is pronounced, but if these children were given non-language tests that have been standardized on whites, they excel, even to a sensational extent. Their elder brothers excel when they are thrown into critical action, as they have been in the recent world war. In rhythm, so little regarded in our white society, the Indians excel. In public spirit they excel, and in joy of life, and in intensity realized within quietude. They excel in art propensities, and in truthfulness. These superiorities will be masked by an apparent inferiority until their group as a group moves into status and power. Then the mask will fall away. The application of this fact to underprivileged ethnic groups in general is readily apparent.

And last, the Indians and their societies disclose that social heritage is far more perduring than is commonly believed. On how small a life-base, on a diminished and starved life-base for how many generations, the motivations and expectations of a society, and its world-view and value system and loyalties, can keep themselves alive; how these social possessions, which are of the soul, can endure, like the roots and seeds on the Mojave desert, through long ages, without one social rain; and how they rush, like these roots and seeds, into surprising and wonderful blossom when the social rain does come at last. Perhaps no other ethnic groups have revealed this old, all-important truth so convincingly as the Indians have done. Indeed, this capacity for perdurance is one of the truths on which the hope of our world rests—our world grown so pallid in the last century, and now so deathly pallid, through the totalitarian horror. The sunken stream can flow again, the ravaged desert can bloom, the great past is not killed. The Indian experience tells us this.



CHAPTER 15

*The First Inter-American
Conference on Indian Life*

ABOUT 1915, one Dr. Manuel Gamio came to supervise the excavations of the incomparable ruins at Teotihuacan. In 1917 he launched the most exhaustive, *integral* research project attempted up to that time in the Western world. His program was to make an actually objective study, complete and final, demographic, economic, sociological, of the peoples of the Valley of Teotihuacan. Gamio had been a student of Franz Boas at Columbia. His first findings were published in 1922 in three huge volumes entitled *La Poblacion del Valle de Teotihuacan*.

Having completed his great work, Gamio wanted to go into action. He had concluded that nothing less than "integral" education—education brought to bear on the community as a whole, involving itself with the whole life of the community and conducted in all the deeper things by the community itself—nothing less could meet the need, the desperate and profound spiritual need, of Mexico and her Indians.

Such education he brought into being in the Valley of Teotihuacan. It included the schooling of the Indian children, but went beyond to a health program, to an agricultural program, to the revival of the arts and crafts. This enterprise, which President Obregón sponsored, which was financed by the fees visitors paid at the ruins, was terminated through political change when Calles became President. But in the meantime, it had become known to the Indian populations of the Americas.

Coincident with Gamio's integral education enterprise, the Pueblos of the American southwest had attracted the world's attention. In their struggle to hold their institutions and religions from the Indian Bureau's death sentence, they had made

known what sort of integral education it was that had been practiced by Indians from Stone Age times.

In 1931, some of those in the United States who had joined cause with the Pueblos met with Mexico's workers in education. Jointly, they projected a clearinghouse of Indian data, internationally oriented. They agreed that it was the nations themselves which must be led to create and sustain the institution.

In 1932, under the leadership of the late Dr. Ernest Huber, of Johns Hopkins, a great anatomist and a passionate devotee of the Indians' cause, an inter-American group was formed in order to lay before the Third International Eugenics Congress the record of Indian life. A "Graphic Display of the Population Record of the Native Races of America" was prepared. It showed the Indians to be not a dying but a growing people.

In ensuing years, at meetings of the Western Republics at Montevideo and at Lima, actions were taken preparatory to the First Inter-American Conference on Indian Life. Bolivia was made the host country, but surrendered this honor to Mexico. On April 14, 1940, the Conference was inaugurated, at Patzcuaro. It was at Patzcuaro, four centuries before, that a sixty-year-old priest, Don Casco de Quiroga, had drawn the Indians into *hospitales*, where they lived and carried forward their numerous crafts, while they tilled the adjacent fields. All around the dreamlike lake on whose shore Patzcuaro is built, and back into the purple mountains, these *hospitales* were both the local self-government and the industry of the countryside.

Today there remains the original monastery, and the surrounding wall of the first of the *hospitales*. Within the wall there grow olive trees four hundred years old, of fabulous dimensions. The bones of Quiroga rest within the beautiful provincial museum maintained by the town of Patzcuaro.

This was the environment of the First Inter-American Conference on Indian Life. Nineteen Republics were present. From a number of the countries, opposing domestic elements were brought together. Specialists on Indian life attended from most of the countries, in addition to the official delegations; and Indian delegates came from countries as far apart as the United States and Bolivia.

Universally, through the ten days of the sessions, it was felt that a culmination had been reached and a new epoch begun. There was determination to get results; and though strongly contending philosophies and political situations held back no

force of expression, there was in every critical matter a "give and take." All of the important actions when finally taken were unanimous.

Four sections worked throughout the Conference: social-economic, legislative, educational, biological. A subsection dealt with arts and crafts. The Indians held their own sessions apart, but participated also in the sectional and plenary meetings. The prepared papers of the Conference totaled 1,100 extra-length papers; they amounted to a cyclopedia on the living Indian. The "Acta Final," reporting only the resolutions and actions taken, filled 58 single-spaced pages.

Representative of the resolutions which were passed are these:

I. The nations of the Americas shall adopt and intensify the policy of offering the amplest opportunity for the display of the capacity of their Indian groups, to the end that the Indian cultures shall not die but shall endure to enrich the culture of each nation and of the world and contribute to the energies of the nations.

II. Where there exists an over-concentration of the ownership or control of land, the respective governments shall take appropriate measures, in accordance with equity and justice . . . ; and we recommend that they adopt measures appropriate to their own situations to help the Indian populations in building up their economic life, providing them with needed land, water, credit, and technical facilities.

1. That each government shall establish an agency or an office with the object of concentrating attention upon the problems of the Indians, and of focusing upon Indian need in effective manner the services of the governments.

2. That such Indian agencies or offices should not monopolize the administration of Indian services, but should operate to focus upon the problems of the Indian all the resources of the governments as well as all the local resources.

3. That the offices of Indian Affairs should work with the Indians through indirect methods, utilizing the Indian groups as their media, or otherwise developing or utilizing cooperative organizations for the mutual aid and mutual defense of the Indians.

At the close of the Patzcuaro Conference, the nineteen governments in attendance established provisionally the Inter-American Institute of the Indian.

The Institute became definitive when ratified by the governments through treaty. The member governments now are: Mexico, the United States, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama, Nicaragua, Cuba, Santo Domingo, Colombia, Bolivia, Peru, Venezuela, Paraguay. The first Director of the Institute

was Moises Saenz, educator and scholar of Indian life, from Mexico, at the time Mexico's ambassador to Peru. On Saenz's untimely death in 1942, Manuel Gamio succeeded him. This hemisphere does not contain a broader-minded man or a spirit more devoted than Manuel Gamio. I served as President of the Institute's Governing Board until May, 1946, and now represent the United States on that Board.

The Institute is supported by the several governments through quota payments; it is an autonomous part of the Pan-American system. Under the Treaty, each member country organizes and supports, within its own boundaries, a National Institute of the Indian, which is a branch of the International Institute. All of the National Institutes are now in being, and some of them are major forces in their countries. The United States has formed its National Institute. The Senate repeatedly has voted the funds for its operations but the subcommittee on Interior Department appropriations of the House Appropriations Committee has repeatedly refused them. Thus, in spite of the treaty-making Senate, the United States has breached the Inter-American Indian treaty.

At the Patzcuaro Conference, the achievements in Indian affairs of two countries stood out. These were Brazil and Canada (which did not attend the Conference nor join the Institute), in some respects at opposite poles, but for that very reason especially interesting.

Canada's Indian policy was, from the first, based on the English policy of respecting the Indian landholdings and keeping faith with the tribes. It was also concerned with conserving natural resources. The Hudson's Bay Company, formed by Charles II of England in 1670 to exploit all the lands watered by streams flowing into Hudson's Bay, was itself a conservator of Indian life and society. As such, and through the medium of the Indians, it became the earliest institution in the modern white world to apply itself to the conservation of natural resources. The resources were the fur-bearing animals; but these existed within the web which included the forest and the man. In the United States the web was reft asunder; in the Hudson's Bay area, after a good deal of early destruction, the web was permitted to regenerate itself, and is nearly intact today.

Canada made Indian treaties thriftily and never broke them; neither did Canada drive the tribes at one another's throats nor fight them. She formulated out of practice, a brief, flexible body of Canadian Indian law which is eminent for fairness of spirit and for common sense. She did not force land allotment on her

Indians; she did not appropriate their communal funds or divert them into her costs of administration; she did not tolerate corruption in her Indian Service. She provided an orderly, dignified transition for individual Indians, out of the tribal and into the general life, but she did not force the process by way of the many kinds of bludgeoning and confiscation employed in the United States. And this is still true in the present day.

However, a qualification must be added. Canada's "frame of reference" in Indian matters has been a narrow one, and until now has caused her somewhat to withhold herself from the movement of Indian regeneration which is reaching to the whole hemisphere. Canada's Indian goal is to make Indians self-supporting and to Christianize them. She does not, officially, acknowledge that Indian heritage and Indian society have greatness in them. They have usefulness, but except in the wilderness of the far North, they have no indispensability; and they have no generative, creative role. The Christian denominations, with their asocial view of Indian life; the keeping of faith in all practical matters with the tribes; and the movement of Indians as individuals into the prevailing economy—these influences and norms supply the framework of Canada's Indian policy.

Genius, vision, adventurousness are not greatly present in Canada's Indian record. But it means much that there is one Commonwealth in the Western world—there is only one—which from beginning to end has shown moral integrity in dealing with Indians and has kept the faith.

There is one other unblemished record, but the nation, Denmark, is not of the Western world. Commencing nearly two hundred years ago, Denmark recognized the Eskimos of Greenland and their culture as being permanent. Her scholars rendered the Eskimo language into written form. Not isolated from Denmark or the wider world, but united with them, are the Greenland Eskimos, by virtue of being sophisticated in a proud culture of their own.

The other outstanding country of the Western Hemisphere, in its dealing with the Indians, is Brazil where more than one million forest and jungle Indians are living today. In the early years after the white man came to Brazil, down to the 1890's, it had been taken for granted that an unbridgeable gulf divided the white man from the Brazilian Indian. The Indian had no rights at all, no value except as a jungle slave and a purchaser of firewater.

Within Brazil, advocates of the Indian began speaking persistently, as early as 1896. Their farthest-heard voice was Pro-

fessor Dario Velloza, in Curityba, but not until 1910 was broad action achieved. In that year, by Presidential decree, the Brazilian Service for the Protection of the Indian was established; its Director was General (then Colonel) Rondon—Candido Mariano de Silva Redondo.

The task was gigantic; but the task was entrusted to a giant. General Rondon was (and is, for he lives and works on, as his eightieth year approaches) a man of greatness, intellectual, emotional and moral. He was a man of achievement even before 1910, as a soldier, a civil engineer, a geographer and an ethnographer. Charged with building the telegraph circuit, he undertook to fulfill the commission without shedding Indian blood. The jungle region was inhabited by wild tribes who had never experienced anything but terror at the white man's hands. Many of the tribes had become desperate in the struggle to survive at all. Rondon built the telegraph line, and while building it, he converted these fugitive, embattled tribes to friendliness as he went along.

The Indian service which Rondon came to develop is an exciting institution to the student of administration. Rondon, who knew the jungle and its peoples and the modes of direct and indirect slavery which had persisted for so long, sought through research and experimentation to discover practical programs valid for the societies and situations of the Indians. He established a limited number of "Indian Posts" widely scattered, reaching into the remotest jungle and forest regions. Each of these Posts he made into a center for "action-research, research-action." Results were recorded, interchanged, and delivered to the people of Brazil in written and pictorial form. Always, the dimensions of the problem and task were kept to the fore. The Indian service was a trial ground of an enterprise which must be expanded and continued, directed at the salvation of a whole race.

Rondon had no dogma of "segregation" and "assimilation" or "individualization" or "collectivization." He knew that humans must move into change from where they are, carrying with them what they are; and he knew the meaning and value of the native societies. He believed, and again and again in very dramatic ways demonstrated, that the jungle tribes could comprehend anything they needed to know and could make profound adjustments without becoming disrupted. Through wise speech, even Socratic discourse could be entered into with them. This required, on the white man's side, knowledge, but more than that, it required empathy—the power to identify one's own

thinking and feeling with the thinking and feeling of others. It required active love; Rondon lived and worked by Goethe's principle: Only through love is there understanding.

He sent his "call for creators" to the youth of Brazil, and enlisted a personnel of unusual endowment, intellectual and moral. He formulated a decentralized administration; each Indian Post and Community and Farm Center must find its own solution in constant interaction with the tribes. Every worker knew that the practical discoveries made would be faithfully relayed to the Brazilian people. From 1910 to 1930 there was continuity, under Rondon's magnetic leadership. But in 1930, from political causes, national support for the Indian service was reduced to a pittance. Many of the field station workers stayed on their jobs, throwing in their lot with the Indians. In 1939, national support was renewed, under a Policy Board which General Rondon headed and now heads. One of Rondon's understudies, the able and superior Dr. José Maria de Paula, serves as Director of the Indian Protective Service, now placed in the Department of Agriculture.

"Die if you need to; but kill, never." Such was Rondon's injunction to his workers. Sometimes they did die; even in immediate self-defense they never killed. And soon, the whole unencompassable jungle knew what was happening. The tribes congregated about the Indian Posts, now numbering 106. There they could have schooling, clinical service, implements and seed, learn new techniques of jungle agriculture and livestock husbandry. Extensive communal fields for the cultivation of wheat, flax, millet, cotton, manioc, rice, were cleared and improved, the tribes contributing the labor. Agricultural, fishing and hunting areas were demarked for exclusive use by the tribes. Meantime, the subtle adjustments of jungle life were carefully not broken down. And nothing, as an absolute, was imposed or "high-pressured" on the Indians. The methods were democratic and designed to win maximum permanent results through minimum official control and expense, maximum results made permanent through being achieved by the tribes themselves and thus organically incorporated.

I think there can be no question but that the Brazilian Indian service is the best equipped and most thoroughly committed of any of the Indian services; and taken as a whole, it is both the most inspired and down-to-earth, and probably the most economically operated. It is not ashamed to be moved by an "over-belief," an intellectual passion whose affirmations are not coercive on those who do not share it. Thus de Paula does not

hesitate to speak of "this race which could not be exterminated in more than four hundred years of oppression, whose deep-rooted pride and independence could not even be diminished, and whose personality, filled with noble sentiments of attachment to the native soil, affection and devotion to the family, and generous hospitality to the stranger, could not be weakened . . . Courage in fight, and abnegation and stoic resignation before privations and suffering, these are attributes sufficient to constitute the strongest and most progressive race in the world, if they had been properly encouraged . . . by the first colonists."

Rondon and his co-workers serve not only the Indians, but the expansion of the culture and soul of Brazil.

Since the Patzcuaro Conference, interest in the Indians has deepened and widened throughout the Western Hemisphere. In recent years, revolutions in Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, Guatemala—countries whose populations are two-thirds Indian or more—have had elements of mass-movement in them, as had the El Salvador revolution. Now they are reaching below the political level, and across the narrow political boundaries of previous years. They are not, as yet, Indian revolutions, but they include genuine and deeply intended efforts to free and aid the Indians. Should they fail, it might very well be that Indian-centered revolutions would take their place. The awareness of this fact is a potent awareness in Guatemala and in all the Andean countries. It reinforces other governmental trends not sharply revolutionary—trends toward the economic, bio-psychological and political strengthening of the several Republics viewed as wholes. Since 1940, these trends have been reinforced by the systematic interchange, from all the nations of the West to each nation, of the data of experimental social achievement, including an interchange of personnel.

Consecutive, building effort often can take the place of advancement through revolutionary shock. There are ways other than the direct struggle of social classes for the achievement of basic, revolutionary, necessary changes. Not to use peaceful, readjusting, building methods, in the Latin-American countries, would mean continuity of revolutionary shock. Unless revolution passes into creative construction (as it did in Mexico under Cárdenas, for example), even the basic revolutionary gains cannot hold their own. These facts are strong in the consciousness of many Latin-American governments now, and they favor the multiplication of social enterprise directed at the basic populations—the Indians.

Bolivia supplies an example. Ernest C. Maes, a Spanish-

American social scientist of New Mexico, formerly with the United States Soil Conservation Service, and later the emissary of the National Indian Institute of the United States to all of the South American countries, now serves as Counselor to the Ministry of Education of Bolivia. His experimental work, in part financed by the Inter-American Educational Foundation, is subordinate to the Bolivian government. In its essence the Bolivian enterprise carries forward that "integral education" which Manuel Gamio had demonstrated in the Valley of Teotihuacan twenty-five years before. It works not in one but forty-one population areas of altiplano and valley. Health education and agricultural education teachers and home demonstration agents work as permanent members of the staffs of forty-one rural school centers. Motion pictures are used, and a traveling theater. The social unit served is the inexpungeable Indian community; the whole life-problem of the Indian is being experimentally attacked in one unified effort; and the permanent structures of the communities are being integrated with the schools which are so much more than schools.

At the political level, an event of irrevocable significance took place in May, 1945, at La Paz, Bolivia. It paralleled the same kind of event, which had preceded it, in Peru. The First Bolivian Indian Congress assembled; 1,400 delegates came, from the highlands, the valleys and the tropics. Gone was the conventional image of the Andean Indian obsessed with an "inferiority complex" and so indrawn that he would not commune with the wider world. The All-Indian Congress concentrated on essentials; and an impressive identity of conception, among groups which had never met each other before, is evident in the record of the proceedings. At the end of the Congress, the then President of Bolivia (Villarreal) announced four decrees, consonant with the demands of the Congress. One decree abolished the system of *mita* (forced labor, principally in the mines) and the *pongueaje* by which hacienda owners forced their peons to supply the hacienda larder from their own starvation provender. Another decree prohibited the hacienda practice of using the children of the peons for house labor without pay. A fourth decree projected the establishment of a comprehensive Agrarian Code.

The diversity of the Indian events of the years since 1940 can be only suggested here. In the jungles of Nicaragua, for example, among the 20,000 Miskito Indians, we encounter the following enterprise:

Loaned by the United States Navy to the Inter-American Indian Institute, at the request of Nicaragua, Lieutenant Commander Michel Pijoan made a survey of the health of the Miskito people. He found that 90 per cent of the morbidity among these jungle dwellers was caused by nine principal diseases. He believed that the Indians themselves would be able to diagnose and cure these diseases through the means now known to medicine.

It was done. The native *curanderos* were assembled at the hospital of the region, a mission hospital directed by a first-rate doctor who understood and liked the Indians. They received for three months clinical, as well as verbal, training. Drugs were donated by the Wythe Drug Company. The *curanderos* returned to their home neighborhoods. The drugs were paid for by the Indian patients or their families; the proceeds went into a revolving fund to buy more drugs. The *curanderos* served without pay; the mission hospital supervised them. The Miskito Indians became better served—self-served—medically and in public health than were the city dwellers of many of the Latin-American countries. The Miskito Indian health service is fully operating today. The stimulus for this Nicaraguan enterprise came from Dr. Victor McGusty who visited America from the Southwest Pacific, and told of the sub-professional health system of Fiji. The mechanism for transmitting the stimulus was the Inter-American Institute of the Indian.

In Guatemala, overwhelmingly Indian in its population and in its unextinguished tradition, there are other developments. There, under the leadership of Antonio Goubaud Carrera, a richly trained social scientist who unites a daring imagination with hardest practicality, the "integral" methods of Indian work are being pressed through all the glittering plateau country—the thousands of Indian communities, the fifteen pre-Columbian language groups. A phase of the effort is the bold approach to the subject of bi-lingual education. The nations at the Patzcuaro Conference recognized this problem. Classroom teaching exclusively in Spanish and other European languages had left the millions of Mexican, Central American and Andean Indians illiterate in the European language. Small-scale demonstrations in the United States and Mexico had established (as the Cherokee Indians had established more than a century earlier) that initial literacy *in the native Indian language* made effective literacy. The subject was of extreme importance. Two-way literacy would stabilize, enrich and free from insularity

the Indian soul; it well could be the beginning of the output of great literature by Indians; it would speed the development of the nations as integrations of plural, mutually reinforcing cultures. At Pitzcuaro, the nations recommended bi-lingual teaching in the schools. But in none of the countries was pedagogical inertia ready for such a re-direction. The systems of schools were not organized or oriented that way. In general, the great adventure was nowhere seriously attempted.

Dr. Goubaud, through the Guatemalan National Indian Institute, and with the help of a Negro specialist in linguistics (Dr. Mark Hanna Watkins, loaned by Fisk University from the United States) is exploring systematically this fundamental problem of the Indian. He is exploring the other problems—economic, hygienic, Indian group-structure, existing and possible administrative mechanisms—which are involved with the language problem. Guatemala's technical resources are placed liberally at his disposal. If continuity of time be granted—which seems very probable now—Guatemala, which until yesterday had no Indian welfare movement at all, well may become a pioneering nation in behalf of all Indian cultures. That exquisite blend of Maya-Quiche culture with post-Conquest Spanish culture, which distinguishes the highland Indian communities of Guatemala, may enter an epoch of new springtide and of national and world communion.

CHAPTER 16

Summary and Prediction

THE CONTROLLING fact of Indian life today, and of present governmental Indian enterprise, is the triumph of the *group life* of the Indians. This triumph contains within itself the future of the Indians, and their renewed power to benefit mankind. It contains within itself the triumph of their individuals.

Across four hundred years, the struggle of the Indians in behalf of their group life was waged as an enormous delaying action. Indian groups numbering more than forty thousand social units on the two continents sustained this delaying action,

each unit largely in isolation from the others. In the process of this struggle, deep changes took place in Indian life. The changes were not merely mechanical. They did not consist merely in the loss of this and that native "trait" and the acceptance of this and that European "trait." Rather, organic assimilation and vital synthesis took place.

There was no method of destruction that was not used against them, and most of them coped with all the methods of destruction. Legal proscription, administrative proscription; military slaughter; enslavement, *encomienda*, forced labor, peonage; confiscation of nearly all lands, forced individualization of residual lands; forced dispersal, forced mass-migration, forced religious conversions; religious persecutions which hunted down the social soul to its depths, and the propaganda of scorn; catastrophic depopulation, which mowed down the native leadership and the repositories of tradition; bribery of leadership, and the intrusion of quisling governments by the exploiting powers. Indian group life—Indian societies—outwore all the destructions.

Now, at last, the Indians' delaying action has changed in some countries, is changing in others, to a strategy of advance. The proscriptions are ended, or are being ended. The nations are accepting the Indians' societies as being unkillable and even indispensable. Rondon in Brazil, in 1910, first challenged the proscription, ended it, and built Brazil's Indian service upon the Indian groups. Mexico, in the unrolling of her last revolution, affirmed the ancient values. The United States, after 1933, radically enunciated and set in motion the policy of *social action vested in the Indian groups and executed by the groups from their own centers*. In Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, the *comunidades*, numbering four thousand in Peru alone, are becoming incorporated into the social service and agricultural improvement programs, the educational systems, and the slow-starting yet insistently advancing agrarian revolution. But let us look at a few representative Indian societies of today for a view of the Indian's New World.

On the cold heights, at 13,000 feet elevation, the *comunidad* of Collana in Bolivia looks down from three leagues away upon La Paz, the capital. The Collanas number only some 600. Social management is entirely in the hands of the pre-Conquest *ayllu*. Each year there is carried out the reassignment of land to families; the cattle browse on the common range; the planting and harvesting are done by voluntary co-operation. Annually, the people elect their *alcade* and their *cabildo* (council). These

officers regulate the use of all resources, and sit in judgment on all cases civil and criminal. No outsider is permitted to remain overnight in Collana. Since Inca times, there has been almost no change; only a loss of contact with the wider Indian world which became dispersed or immured after the Conquest.

In Peru, near Jauja, is the *comunidad* of Muquiyauyo. Muquiyauyo is constituted by the union of four *ayllus*, each having its own elected officers. These sit in the council which meets each week; and the council includes all males over twenty years old. Offices are so rotated that every male finds himself in due time drawn into some responsible function of the government.

In Peru, any unused portion of an hacienda or church estate may be taken over by the government and offered for public sale. Muquiyauyo, out of its savings from wages earned at the mines, purchased a thousand acres of such land. On this new land, alfalfa was cultivated through joint labor. In ten years, 70,000 *soles* were saved up; this saving was invested in a hydro-electric plant, built through contributed labor. The plant generates 4,400 volts; it supplies light and power to the *comunidad*, and supplies half of the electricity needed by the town of Jauja, four miles away. An electrically run flour mill grinds the corn of the *comunidad*; thus the women are released for leisure or for the crafts. Muquiyauyo has built, through community labor, a rural school for 300 pupils, and has presented it to the government. Here is witnessed the *mita* of Inca days, before the Spaniards perverted it. Every able-bodied male contributes labor to the public work. Women may substitute for the males of their families. Out of its communal fund, the *comunidad* furnishes to parents a bonus of five *soles* for each male infant born, and two and a half *soles* for each female infant. When a child, seeking additional schooling, or a young man or woman, seeking university training, leaves the *comunidad*, the communal treasury subsidizes him.

Muquiyauyo is one of the many *comunidades* (there exist, even, co-operative federations of *comunidades*) which demonstrate not merely the "staying" capacity of Indian societies but their competence for new adjustment. It has brought to life many of the ancient values, has modernized the immemorial man-nature co-operation, and has displayed readiness for innovation and the capacity to innovate.

In Greenland, the literate Eskimo culture, two centuries old, has produced novels, poetry, histories, drama, a free press, and a perfectly normal merger of the Eskimo way with the Euro-

pean Danish. In Alaska we find that most of the Eskimo communities carry forward distributive co-operation, modern style, with perfect, easygoing success. Yet their social forms and their personality types remain largely what they were before the earliest contact with any other modern men.

We go down to the warm southeastern Alaska coast and discover the Metlakatlangs, a west-coast tribe which, within the memory of the living, was uprooted and driven in migration from Canada. We find a social organization which is an all-embracing co-operative commonwealth, wholly modern in its forms. Fishing and canning are a corporate enterprise; the municipality owns and operates all of its utilities, including electricity. When, here and there around the world, relief needs present themselves, Metlakatla sends its check unsolicited. Complete modernity, embracing the unforgotten past!

Then we come to the Hopi Indian society of the Northern Arizona plateau. In its beautiful but very difficult desert land, on its high rock-mesas swept by storm and brooded over by sun and stars which seem very near, the Hopi race has sustained an unbroken, undiminished continuity for more than fifteen hundred years. Its whole past moves on explicitly and consciously into its present; and all is magnetized from a future which draws the tribal soul as a work of art in process draws its creator. Through an immense, ceaseless action of the will, the Hopis believe that they help to sustain the universe.

Food and water must be wrested by the Hopis from a semi-arid land. Famine, through the centuries, has been an ever-present threat, and often a grim reality. Yet the Hopis have met the challenge of the desert on the physical as well as on the social and spiritual level. The desert forced them to develop a remarkably effective technology of dry farming. On the social level, it forced on them a democratic, co-operative social structure which tolerated no waste of human energy and no individual self-seeking.

Seen as a whole, the Hopis are a profoundly and intensely practical people. That nature-man constitution which they have built through their ages will incorporate any gain—any new tool or goal—which is contributive to Hopi destiny. Hopi inner life is not small or eccentric, but catholic and cosmic. The Hopi's world-view and art of self-making are not less congenial to the world's future than to his own past. The opportunity for teaching and for wise administration is immense and fascinating, *in terms of the Hopi*. But the mere intrusion of influence is mostly

wasted effort; when successful, it is, in the degree of its success, only harmful. But creative social planning is within the Hopi's scope now as of old; and the modern social sciences can become the Hopi's tools not less than ours.

Antonio Garcia of Colombia has pointed out that the old assault against the Indian societies had been marked by two conditions. One condition, the more commonly taken into account, was the attempted extermination of the societies, and it failed. The other condition was the exclusion of the societies from the flow of national life—the flow of political power, of economic benefits and of technology. What would the Indian societies become, what would they achieve, if this second condition were reversed? Would their power to create, within the national and the world setting, prove to be as great as their power of resistance, of endurance and of inner regeneration?

I have certain predictions to make, growing out of my years of absorption with the Red Indian situation, my life with them, my efforts for them as Commissioner.

The Western Hemisphere nations increasingly will base their Indian programs on the Indian social groups. They will do this with greater boldness and inventiveness as experience is accumulated, is recorded, and is interchanged among nations.

The Indian societies will keep their ancient democracy, sometimes adapting it to the larger tasks which they will take to themselves, sometimes with no adaptation at all. There will exist productive Indian local democracies to the number of forty thousand or more—democracies social and economic, not merely political. These Indian social units will become federated within nations and over national boundaries. They will traffic with the other social groupings within the nations, particularly with labor, with conservation bodies, with research institutions, with organizations concerned with the arts.

These Indian societies will supplement their ancient co-operative forms with modern co-operative forms; they well may become the major embodiment in our hemisphere of the co-operative movement of the world.

With the advance of "integral" education, including bilingual literacy, the realized mental potential and the social energy of the Indian societies, and their biological vigor, will increase by hundreds, even thousands of per cent. A large number of their individuals will pass out into the general life of their nations, and they will pass into increasingly higher social levels. But they will not become divorced from the societies which formed them and gave them their orientation; and thus

they will play a part in the world of the future out of lessons drawn from the past.

As the Indian societies move from their four-centuries-long delaying action into a confident and rejoicing advance, expression along many lines of literature, of the arts, of religion and of philosophy will come into being. The ancient-modern Indian affirmation of the deathless man-nature relationship will flow into poetry and symbolic art of cosmic intensity, tranquillity and scope.

The movement will be inward and outward at one and the same time—inward to the world-old springs, buried or never buried, which still flow because the societies have not died; outward to the world of events and affairs.

There will come to dawn in the nations, the Indians playing their part, two realizations. The first, that their soils, waters, forests, wild life, the whole web of life which sustains them, are being wasted—often irreparably and fatally. The other, that their local community life, their local democracy, their values which are required for beauty, wisdom and strength—their very societies—are wasting away even as their natural resources are wasting. As these realizations increase, the nations will turn to their Indian societies increasingly, seeking the open secrets they have to reveal.

All these good things will come to pass if the nations will maintain and increase their enterprise and research into Indian need and Indian power. More slowly, less decisively they will come about even if the nations *regress* in their Indian programs. For the delaying action of the Indian societies and of that spirit they represent is ended. They have proved that they cannot be destroyed, and they are now advancing into the world.

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about the author

JOHN COLLIER is one of the world's foremost authorities on Indians. From 1933 to 1945 he served as U. S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs. In those years he revitalized the service, shaping a new understanding of the Indian people and a new governmental attitude toward them. He discovered in Indian society a profound sense of living and a new hope. In the earlier years of his career he taught, in New York and California, sociology, psychology, and applied social science, and worked in the fields of labor relations and immigration. His chief passion has always been wild life and nature, his chief human interest ethnic relations, and ethnic differences and values. He was Adviser on Trusteeship to the American Delegation at the first session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Since his retirement from the federal service he has devoted himself to the Inter-American Indian Institute, and to the Institute of Ethnic Affairs in Washington, which he established to pursue the problems of dependent peoples throughout the world. In October, 1947, *Indians of the Americas* was published in a clothbound edition by W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., by special arrangement with The New American Library. In May, 1948, it received the Anisfield-Wolf award, as one of the two "best works on race published during the previous year." John Collier now lives in New York and teaches at the College of the City of New York.

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